

ON THE MARQUEE

Ballet auditions

The Michigan Ballet Theatre will be holding auditions for its 25th production of the Nutcracker Ballet with the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony, Aug. 28, Aug. 29 and Sept. 12 at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, and Aug. 30 and Sept. 13 at Lawrence Technological University, Southfield. For specific casting times and information, call 788-1185, anytime or 486-1514, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are still available for a Caribbean dinner party to benefit the Michigan Ballet Theatre on Aug. 29. Tickets \$50 per couple, \$25 per person. Call numbers listed above for reservations.

Bloomfield Players

The Bloomfield Players is holding auditions for "Lil Abner" on Monday, Aug. 24 and Tuesday, Aug. 25. Children may audition, 4-7 p.m., and teens and adults 7-10 p.m. Auditions will be held at Lahser High School, 3456 Lahser Road between Long Lake and Hickory Grove. Performers should be prepared to sing and dance. Call 433-0885 for information.

Farmington Players

Farmington Players seeks four men and for women, stage ages 40 to 55 for the Neil Simon comedy, "Californian Suite" Auditions 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 24 and Tuesday, Aug. 24 at the playhouse, 32332 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Show dates Oct. 30-31, Nov. 21. For information, call 553-2955.

Big band

Johnny Trudell and his Orchestra will present a concert 7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 23, in the Prudential Sun Bowl outside the 3000 Town Center Building in Southfield. The Dixie Syncopators will play 7 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26, at the historic Burgh site at Civic Center Drive and Berg Road in Southfield. A story teller will entertain children. Both concerts are free and open to the public.

Youth Philharmonic

Auditions for the Livonia Youth Philharmonic will be 4-9 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 25 and Thursday, Aug. 27, at Faith Lutheran Church in Livonia. Young instrumentalists from the Detroit metropolitan area are invited to audition. The four orchestras of the Livonia Youth Philharmonic provide an opportunity for young instrumentalists, ages 8 to 22, to gain training in orchestral repertoire and technique. Rehearsals are held Saturday mornings and will begin on Sept. 12. Auditions are by appointment only. Call 261-5754.

Chili cookoff

Tickets are available for the 14th annual Michigan Chili Cookoff on Sunday, Sept. 13, at the Lark restaurant, 6420 Farmington Road, West Bloomfield. The winner will represent the state at the World Championship Cookoff. Admission is \$32.50 per person and includes beer, pop and coffee as well as a variety of vittles prepared by Chef Marcus and his staff. Two bands, Mariachi Nuevo Zapopan and the bluegrass R.F.D. Boys will entertain. Event proceeds are to go toward scholarships for local culinary arts students. Tickets are tax deductible. Call 601-4466 for tickets.

If the performers have their way, festival goers will have a great time at the Michigan Renaissance Festival. For many, working at the festival is a labor of love.

BY BILL COULTANT
STAFF WRITER



For entertainers, as well as patrons, a day at the Michigan Renaissance Festival can be a journey into the fantasy of living in a magical time and place far removed from the everyday.

And although many of those musicians, "street people" and actors make their living as year-round professional entertainers, even they can get caught up in the festival spirit.

"The whole grounds, a huge area, is our stage," said Jim Perkins of Farmington Hills.

Perkins, a.k.a. Seamus the Rover, can usually be found playing his guitar and singing Irish folk songs, traditional ballads or join-along drinking songs at Watney's Pub, the festival's recreation of the real thing back in England.

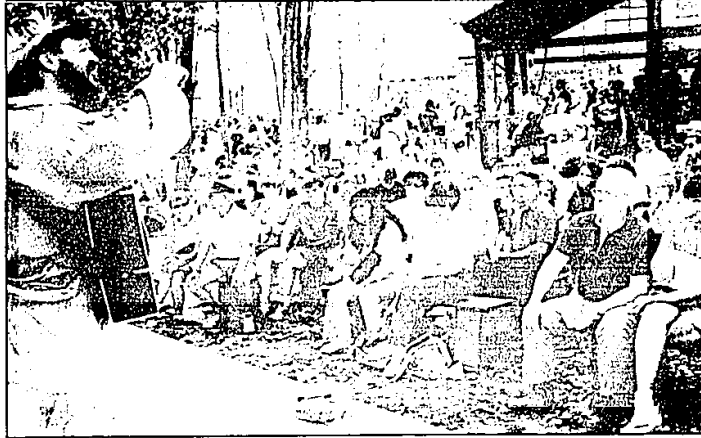
Between acts, Perkins, in full costume, will often stroll the grounds and strike up a tune just to please passers-by, not like most gigs.

"They (festival goers) are going to be accented by somebody," he said. "Since most festival goers expect to be chided by maids or "wenches," ogres, witches and magicians, even professional performers are challenged.

"I prefer improv," said Michaela "Misha" Dionne, who will play Luna the Gypsy Enchantress this year. "You can use your imagination. You're not bound by a script."

Dionne, a professional actress and singer, has played other parts during her 10-year stint with the festival. She keeps busy with the Michigan Opera Theatre, children's theater and other area productions.

Gary Burton of Garden City did not have a theater background when he first



Festival minstrel Jim Perkins, left, entertains festival goers at Watney's Pub with music and songs as Seamus the Rover.

visited the festival, he just came to have a good time. He still does, but now he's on the performing end.

"I fell in love with the place," he said. "So I asked them how I could take part and they told me I'd have to audition."

As they say, the rest is history. Burton is one of the most crowd-pleasing acts at festival. At 6 foot 1 inch and 280 pounds, he can't pose as the nimble court jester.

"The first year, I came up with the idea of being an ogre," he said. "I'd come up to a group of people and put my face right behind someone who was talking and the others would crack up."

Another of Burton's trademark characters is his old woman with a baby. The gimmick? The old woman figure is

carrying a baby, and Burton's head pops through his costume complete with bonnet, as the head of the baby. He's not too concerned with artistic virtuosity as the infant comes mustachioed.

"I can't walk 10 feet without people wanting to take a picture," he said. For many, working festival is strictly amateur, for the love of it. Susan Piper and her dad Bill make a family camping trip out of their weekends near Holly.

"Kids are the most fun," said Susan, who will be a senior at Rochester High School this fall. "But the training they give you is incredible. And you develop close friendships. We're like family."

Susan, like her father, is one of the many street entertainers at the festival.

They both have found the patrons willing to go along with their gigs.

"We're rude," said Bill, who is a plumber in his "day job." "We'll tell them, 'Get on your knees peasants,' and they'll usually laugh or giggle. You can tell if they're not going to want to be approached. But most people really go and expect to have a good time."

And if the entertainers have their way, festival goers will have a good time.

The Michigan Renaissance Festival in Holly began Aug. 15 and will run through Sept. 27 on Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call (313)645-9640.

Kaleidoscope features works that deserve exposure



VIDGOR ZAROMP

The typical solo piece of the summer season has been brightened by some extra events. One of those was the recent program of the Kaleidoscope series at the Birmingham Community House.

In addition to Beth Bowers, flutist and artistic director of the series, the other participants consisted of pianist Pauline Martin, oboist Donald Baker and cellist Marcy Chanteaux. Baker and Chanteaux are DSO musicians.

Typically, this series features mostly works off the beaten track with some emphasis on flute literature.

While all items in this latest program fell into this broad category, the scope and content of the material varied. This ranged from items that one can exist without to those that deserve greater attention and exposure.

An example of the former was the Aulos suite by the Dutch composer Jurriaan Andriessen born in 1925. This work for flute and oboe is a rare selection for this combination and makes substantial demands on the performers, but I was not impressed with its musical content. We know that not all that glitters is gold, but this selection demonstrates that the opposite qualities may not indicate great riches either.

In between the two extremes are works that were pleasing in their appearance but their long-term significance is limited. The selections in that category consisted of a Concerto in F minor by Telemann, arranged for piano and cello, and three pieces by Arthur Foote, arranged for flute, oboe and cello.

Telemann, arranged for piano and cello, and three pieces by Arthur Foote, arranged for flute, oboe and cello.

Foote is a prominent American Romantic composer from New England who was the first who had received his entire musical education in the United States.

The work by Telemann, which was the better one of these, suffered from too much pedaling by Pauline Martin which diminished its baroque effect.

The short exotic selections by Foote consisting of a poem after Omar Khayyam and two pieces from "Five Silhouettes" elicited a unified, full bodied performance by Bowers, Baker and Chanteaux. They did appear, however,

to sound outside their native solo piano habitat.

By far superior were a Sonata for Piano and Cello by Barber and a Trio by Martin. These are two works that deserve to be put on the map.

The Barber Sonata is among his many works that are overshadowed by his overexposed Adagio for Strings. Written at an early age, it is an extremely tonal work, but far from a mere imitation of the Romantic masters. It does reflect freshness and originality with some 20th century sprinks that are in the appropriate proportion.

enough to spice it up, but not excessive. Vidgor Zaromp, born in Poland, educated in Israel and the United States, has a Ph.D. in math and has studied piano, music theory and history.

DON PEDRO'S 2486 Grand River (3 blocks W. of Waterfront) OPEN 7 DAYS 537-1450

\$3.29 LUNCH SPECIALS

MEXICAN SAMPLER \$9.95 FOR TWO

Authentic Mexican Cuisine

FREE Banquet Room for Weddings, Showers & Parties

Picture the Seven Dwarfs without a forest.

Only You Can Forest Land Here.

\$5 OFF \$5 off a large pizza with three or more items. Not valid with any other coupon or special. Offer expires September 10, 1992.

SHIELD'S RESTAURANT • BAKED PIZZERIA

Southfield: 356-2720 | Novi: 489-9110 | Troy: 637-3131 | Sterling Heights: 979-9270

AT WORK...AT PLAY... A PIZZA AT SHIELD'S WILL MAKE YOUR DAY!

peppi's FOOD & SPIRITS

ITALIAN-AMERICAN FOOD

FRESH SEAFOOD

BUY ONE LUNCH OR DINNER GET ONE FREE (up to \$8.00 value) DINING ROOM ONLY

with coupon - not valid Holiday or Pizza.

One coupon per couple. Lowest entree will be deducted.

3270 W. HURON WATERFORD

682-6200 Expires Aug 29, 1992

NOW BOOKING RETURN TO THE GOLDEN AGE OF STEAMBOAT CRUISING

St. Lawrence Cruise Lines Inc. hosts 3, 5, and 7 night luxury cruises along the inland waters of Canada during the months of May through October. The cruises represent a revival of luxury steamboat cruising in Canada. The ships, the Canadian Empress and the Victorian Empress are grand replicas with warm and friendly personalities. Their interiors are designed in charming early heritage style, and furnished to recapture the grace of a turn-of-the-century life style. The cruises retrace the routes of the early explorers passing through some of central Canada's most beautiful scenery. Each trip is profoundly rich in history and includes sample historical commentary en route. Incorporated and all-inclusive in these vacations are numerous regularly scheduled events including visits to castles, forts, historic villages, resorts; tours of Ottawa (the nation's capital), Montreal, and Quebec City. On the Saguenay Fjord and experience the unusually exhilarating opportunity of sighting numerous whale species in waters considered to be the best location in the world for whale-watching. These cruises truly represent a unique way of exploring Canada at its best. Book yours now. For further info, contact your travel professional or St. Lawrence Cruise Lines at 253 Ontario Street, Kingston, Ontario, Canada K7L 2Z4 or call toll-free...1(800)267-7868.

JOIN THE RUSS TROLL CLUB ONLY AT GAGS & GIFTS PARTY SUPPLIES & COSTUMES

& Convenient Locations To Serve You

LIVONIA: 261-8740 | ROYAL OAK: 289-4440 | ROCHESTER HILLS: 299-5444 | CANTON: 459-8883

WESTLAND: 722-3080 | WATERFORD: 681-2223

BUY 7 TROLLS Got The 8th One FREE Ask In Store For Details

Just say it with a RUSS