

In concert

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DESK

Plays the Walk for Justice benefit at the Sheraton below St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (acoustic rock)
(313) 961-4611

CLASH with D.T.S. and Earthquake Plus at 3-0, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak, (alternative)
(810) 569-3344

Friday, June 17

MARK SCHWARTZ
With David Schneider at La Casa Music Series at Birmingham Unitarian Church, 100 Woodward Ave., Birmingham, (acoustic rock)
(810) 646-4950

THE HUNTER
With Brother Kane at Pine Knob Music Theatre, 1775 E. Sashabaw Road, Clarkston, (rock)
(313) 377-0100

BOB BROWNE
Concert, 1090 Rochester Road, Troy, (blues)
(810) 588-3471

NEW HORIZONS
With 311 at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (pop)
(313) 961-4611

BLISS
With 311 at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (pop)
(313) 961-4611

THE STRAIGHT-UP BAND
Barney's, 806 Biddle Ave., Wyandotte, (country)
(313) 285-6615

DIANA KRALL
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor, (jazz)
(313) 662-8310

STEVE SOMERS BAND WITH LADY
Sommers, Jimmy's Next Door, 35323 Ford Road, Westland, (blues)
(313) 722-8883

PHOENIX
With Brothers From Another Planet, The Chivans, Carlton Life and Teddy Richards at Giff's Grille, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac, (rock)
(810) 334-9292

THE LOOK
Watch's on the Border, 20110 W. Warren, Detroit, (rock)
(313) 441-6190

BOB SCHWARTZ
Moby Dick's, 5452 Schaefer Road, Dearborn, (blues)
(313) 581-3650

STEVE NABIELLA
Sports, 150 Maple, Wyandotte, (blues)
(313) 285-5060

THE ALLIATORS
Sun's Dugout, 3350 Auburn Road, Auburn Hills, (blues)
(810) 852-6433

BLUES SURVIVORS
Sun's Dugout, 40000 Garfield, Clinton Township, (blues)
(810) 412-1040

THE BOOZEMEN
Speakeasy, 31410 Ford Road, Garden City, (blues)
(313) 425-7373

THE VERVE PIPE
Bird Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor, (alternative)
(313) 966-8555

JAMES WARDEN
Q Club, 29 S. Saginaw St., Pontiac, (blues)
(810) 334-7411

ARETHA FRANKLIN
Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit, (R&B)
(313) 396-7600

MAGIC DRAGON
With Mick Vanden and Wordan'd at Alvin's, 5158 Cass, Detroit, (alternative)
(313) 832-2355

HONEYBOY
Loo Bar and Grill, 454 E. Lafayette, Detroit, (acoustic)
(313) 965-3737

ROBB ROY
With Saw Kick Run at Magic Bag Theatre, 2220 Woodward Ave., Detroit, (rock)
(810) 544-3030

HUNTER
With Sluggo and Moisture at Finney's, 2963 Woodward Ave., Detroit, (alternative)
(313) 631-8070

ERIC BUCKSON
With Motor City Blues Project, Chisel Bros. and Detroit All Stars at Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, 10 Water St., Pontiac, (blues)
(810) 335-4850

PENNYWISE
With Speedboat at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (punk rock)
(313) 961-4611

MARK CHRISTOFF
With Marty Stuart and Rick Trevino at Hot Country Inn, Bishop Park (between Oak and Elm streets), Wyandotte, (country)
(313) 259-9659

BOB BROWNE
Entourage, 140 Maple St., Wyandotte, (rock)
(313) 283-5222

BOB ROY
The Ark, 637th S. Main St., Ann Arbor, (blues)
(313) 781-1451

BLISS
With 311 at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (pop)
(313) 961-4611

THE STRAIGHT-UP BAND
Barney's, 806 Biddle Ave., Wyandotte, (country)
(313) 285-6615

DIANA KRALL
Bird of Paradise, 207 S. Ashley, Ann Arbor, (jazz)
(313) 662-8310

STEVE SOMERS BAND WITH LADY
Sommers, Jimmy's Next Door, 35323 Ford Road, Westland, (blues)
(313) 722-8883

CONJUNCTION
With Cheap Thrills, Sheeple, Real Life and Black Dots at Giff's Grille, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac, (rock)
(810) 334-9292

THE LOOK
Watch's on the Border, 20110 W. Warren, Detroit, (rock)
(313) 441-6190

Red Rock West' hits the big screen

BY JOHN MONAGHAN

SPECIAL MATTER

Score it high for cult appeal. The leads in "Red Rock West"—Nicolas Cage, Dennis Hopper, Lara Flynn Boyle—all had memorable roles in David Lynch movies. The thought alone of Hopper reprising anything close to the menace of Frank Booth in "Blue Velvet" should sell tickets.

HBO Pictures originally didn't see it that way. It bypassed theatrical release for its low-budget thriller and instead buried it in late-night cable slots and on the shelves of video stores (you can find a single copy at the local Blockbuster, if you're lucky). It took the persistence of a San Francisco art house and small-time distributor to bring the movie to big screens nationally. Following the arrival of "Red Rock West" at the Main Theater in Royal Oak are a string of reviews, hailing it as the year's best American film. While it doesn't deserve this kind of adulation, it's definitely a boot for film noir

MOVIES

buffs who enjoy their thrillers Texas-style. Red Rock is a sand speck of a Southwest desert town where Michael (Cage) limps in on his last tank of gas. Shuffling into the local bar, he's greeted by the owner Wayne (J.T. Walsh), who mistakes him for the hired gun he's been waiting for.

Michael pockets the \$5,000 deposit and takes off for the bartender's house, not to shoot his wife Suzanne (Flynn Boyle) as instructed, but to warn her instead. She appreciates the gesture, doubles Michael's money and sends him on his way. Of course, things never work out this cleanly. The scheming bar owner is also the town sheriff and as he tracks Michael, the real killer arrives. Fans of Dennis Hopper at his most psychotic and anti-social won't be disappointed. Director John Dahl, who debut-

ed in 1989 with another straight-to-cable quickie called "Kill Me Again," has a nice feel for this material. He's obviously seen a number of the film noir titles that "Red Rock West" pays tribute to.

In classic cost-cutting style, the movie sticks close to its quartet of characters. It also has some inventive and often sublimely beautiful camerawork, using midnight blues and deep golds and whites. The force of gunshots is accented by fast pans away from a weapon and toward its prey.

After a while, however, "Red Rock" starts looking like strung-together bits from other people's movies. Cage's character is an ex-Marine; his "Wild at Heart" moniker was Sailor. He and Flynn Boyle hide in a closet and watch the action through darkened slats in a "Blue Velvet."

Hopper, in one of his memorably cheesy lines and again driving a black muscle car, rhapsodizes about the purr of a V-8 en-

gine with the same gusto he once reserved for Palpaté Blue Ribbon. Flynn Boyle makes your standard femme fatale. Is there any doubt that this woman is bad to the bone?

Cage is still playing well, Nicolas Cage. You have to hand it to him for picking unusual projects, though. He can work with the biggest names in Hollywood and then sign up on a no-name project like this one in the hopes of discovering another Lynch or Joel and Ethan Coen. He may have hit paydirt with Dahl.

While underdog status of "Red Rock West" makes it seem better than it actually is, the movie does deserve to be seen by an audience that can laugh along with its low-key humor.

If you have a comment for John Monaghan, call him at 863-2047, mailbox 1866, on a Touch-Tone phone, or write to him care of Street Scene, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

SCREEN SCENE

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across metro Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan.

DETROIT SCIENCE CENTER
6020 John R. (at Warren), Detroit. Call (313) 577-8400 for information. (\$6.50-\$10)

"Rolling Stones at the Max" (USA — 1990). Weekends through June (call for show times). The "world's greatest rock band" captured live during their European Steel Wheels tour. What makes this different from the other half dozen Stones films is that it was filmed for the all-encompassing OMnimax screen.

THE WORLD PARTY
Featuring performances by Inner City and Vapourtronic, and a host of techno DJs including Derrick May, Kevin Saunderson, Juan Atkins, Drexciya's DJ Dimitri and Richie Hawtin at Joe Louis Arena, 600 Civic Center Dr., Detroit. (techno/ambient/mix)
(313) 259-9659

KINOTHEATRE
Capitol Theatre and Arts Centre, 121 University Avenue W., Windsor. Call (519) 971-6160 for information. (\$4)

"Daughters of Darkness" (Belgium/France — 1970). 9 p.m. June 18-19. According to legend (and the Guinness Book of World Records), Hungarian aristocrat

Countess Elizabeth Bathory personally killed over 600 virgins and bathed in their blood to preserve in their own youth. This happy tale is the inspiration for this rarely-seen cult film.

MAGIC BAG THEATRE
22918 Woodward, Ferndale. Call (810) 544-3030 for information. (\$4)

"Bitter Moon" (Britain — 1994). 9 p.m. June 16-18; 8 p.m. June 17-18. Roman Polanski's best movie in 20 years finds a strait-laced Brit (Hugh Grant) drawn to the ramblings of an embittered American expatriate (Pete Postlethwaite) aboard a luxury cruise. Told mostly in flashback, the story of sex gone sour is full of bizarre twists.

MAIN ART THEATRE
118 N. Main St. at 11 Mile, Royal Oak. Films play through at least Thursday. Call (810) 642-0180 for information and show times. (\$6.50; \$4 students; \$3 twilight/matinee)

Thunderharp

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tarist, bassist, drummer and percussionist who isn't afraid to use almost anything, including a fire extinguisher, for the best sound.

Nothing about Thunderharp Choir is contrived. The members insist their sound is spontaneously generated.

"We just kind of jam for awhile and then something clicks," said bassist Don Didonato.

Even though Thunderharp Choir feels creative freedom is the key to its music, perfection is also an essential aspect.

"Everyone is very picky; most everyone does not settle for anything. Everyone demands a lot from each other," Jason McCall-Kuehn, a 1983 graduate of Liv-

onia Stevenson High School.

Even though the members might be picky, they are not afraid to stick their neck out to capture musical creativity, such as using 11 children to sing nursery rhymes. The children sang various songs for roughly an hour, but their appearance on the song "Strawberries" on the band's forthcoming release. The children's voices were essential to the song, according to vocalist Graham Strachan, a 1980 Stevenson graduate.

"The song is about when I moved to this country," said Strachan, who moved from Scotland to the United States as a child. "I remember hearing from the street where I lived a man selling fruit

and calling out 'strawberries' and 'bananas'."

Thunderharp Choir has long-time ties to the area. Strachan, who has penned songs for Atlantic Records artist and Detroit native Liz Larin, also fronts the recently regrouped Robb Roy. Christine McCall-Kuehn, fronted, toured and released an album with Jugglers and Thieves. Jason McCall-Kuehn owns Sound on Sound and is a compatriot of Strachan's in Robb Roy.

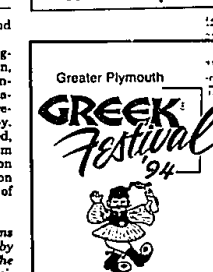
Thunderharp Choir performs along with Pets or Meat, Crabby Jacks, The Penetrators, and The Ground at Griff's Grill, 19 N. Saginaw, Pontiac, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 22. Call (810) 334-9292 for more information.

neer, \$2.95 twilight)
"Widow's Peak" (USA — 1994). Mia Farrow stars in this comedy/mystery set in 1920's Ireland about a gossiping group of well-to-do widows and one young, glamorous widow who comes to town and stirs up trouble.
"Kika" (Spain — 1993). Word isn't good on the latest from wildman director Pedro Almodovar ("Four Weddings and a Funeral," "See Main Art Theater listing)

"Four Weddings and a Funeral" (Britain — 1994). From Mike Newell, the director of "Enchanted April," an engaging story about a confirmed bachelor who runs across the same woman at the numerous weddings he attends. Hugh Grant and Andie MacDowell star.

MAPLE THEATRE
4135 W. Maple Road, Bloomfield. Films play through at least Thursday. Call (810) 855-9090 for information. (\$5.75; \$3.95 matinee)

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