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down of a new century, and a year before Einstein published "The Theory of Relativity."

The dingy Paris cafe where Einstein is waiting for a family friend is the turn-of-the-century meeting place of painters, writers and other free thinkers who soon will give a vision to the new century's avant-garde.

While the revelation of E=Mc<sup>2</sup> may have been directed to finding the simple, unifying principles of the objective universe, the world in the early 1900s was far from unified. The arts, sciences and industry were exploding with innovations and challenging the cherished 19th-century notions of culture.

Set amid the whirlwind of cultural change, Martin's comedic take on cubism and relativity seem to be a perfect match.

Both the highly confident Picasso and Einstein have seen

the future. The intrigue is knowing that in a matter of a few years the rest of the world will realize the profound implications of their compelling new views. Of course, in comedic terms, it's wonderful fodder for the ultimate insider's joke. Martin doesn't miss many opportunities to wring a laugh or deeper sentiment from the many apparent ironies. The focus, quite clearly, is on the funny bone.

There's a play of ideas and a poetry in Steve's work that's uncommon in much of today's plays," said Randall Arney, who has directed the play in its various versions since it premiered three-and-a-half years ago at the Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago, where the scheduled nine-week performance grew into a five-month run.

"It's a combination of being wildly funny and having real

intelligence," said Arney, former artistic director at Steppenwolf, considered one of the leading regional theaters in the country. According to Arney, Martin's "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" is a combination of the sharp social tongue of Tom Stoppard and the absurd silliness of Eugene Ionesco.

There's a hilarious Martin montage when the wonders of the 20th century are envisioned: the modernization of Hiroshima, banning smoking in restaurants and airplane travel. In Martin's trademark fashion, the sublime becomes indistinguishable from the ridiculous.

And some questions about art, reminds Martin, are destined to go unanswered. Like why there's no demand for paintings that feature sheep or Jesus.

"Watching the play is like spending one-and-a-half hours

inside of Steve Martin's head," said Arney.

### Wonder and plenty of laughs

"We're at the end of the century and can look back at the influences who shaped it," said Arney. "And we can look ahead and wonder whose ideas will shape the 21st century. The play strikes a chord."

To most audiences, Martin is perhaps best known for his on-screen roles ("Sgt. Bilko," "Father of the Bride," "Grand Canyon," "LA Stories," "Roxanne," "Planes, Trains and Automobiles," and "The Jerk").

Or for those who recall his debut in the mid 1970s after a stretch as writer on the Smothers' Brothers show, Martin will forever be remembered for his refreshingly, off-beat onstage humor ("Excuse me," and

the hilarious routine, "Let's get small").

"My hat is off to Steve," said Arney. "In many ways, critics were tougher on him because he was a celebrity. He didn't have to try to reinvent himself, although writing for the stage was somewhat unfamiliar ground."

Although most contemporary comedians are more inclined to turn to sophomoric ridicule rather than sharp intelligence, Martin, who has extensively studied art and philosophy, is by no means uniformed about the high-brow subjects in his play. Then again, a colorful Seinfeld episode based on Picasso's blue period, or Einstein's preferred bagel do not seem unlikely.

In style and tone, the one-act play is much like Martin's zany and playful wit that often explores randomness, the bounds of embarrassment and

unrequited love. There's more to Martin's silliness than the cosmetics of theater.

"Steve has an ability to make us laugh and cry, and help us see that the two aren't that far from each other," said Arney. "That's the place that's the same for all of us — the place of our humanity."

"Picasso at the Lapin Agile" is not merely an expanded Saturday Night skit as some critics have suggested. Rather, it shows Martin's playwrighting savvy whereby the ensemble cast of nine nearly remain on stage for the entire 80-minute play.

But on an ethereal plane, Martin demonstrates an uncanny ability to put the absurdly meaningful in a hilariously serious context.

Who said a clown couldn't deliver a line?

## Relapse from page E1

1990 album "Ritual de lo Habitual" album, there's a strange sound that was even past the first side of the record. It takes a long time to get to that sound," Perkins said.

"With 'Kettle Whistle' and 'So What' you hear it brewing. It's a sound. It's a Jane's Addiction sound. If you listen to the Chili's (album) 'One Hot Minute' and Perry and Perry are making different music than Dave and Flea. To put us together, it's chemical.

Who knows what's going to happen."

Perkins described the song "Kettle Whistle" as a "nice unfolding story. It takes its time. It has beautiful things to look at and hear and then it kind of grabs you by the throat."

"So What?" is a combination of "very modern sounds connected with very timeless Perry Farrell melodies. It's just like 'Hard Charger' or perhaps 'Freeway' on the Porno record. There's a certain shininess to it, a certain

sonic frequency that you don't hear most of the time."

The album "Kettle Whistle" is the brainchild of Perkins, the unofficial historian of the band.

"To me, I love the band so much that at the time I would take everything home. I still do with the band Porno for Pyros, the new Jane's Addiction stuff, and with Banyan, which I produced and put out. I collect all my tapes and take all the stuff home."

Perkins listened to all the

tapes and chose versions of the songs that he thought was "worthy of the new Jane's Addiction album."

"I've got us doing (Led Zeppelin's) 'Whole Lotta Love' and funny things like that. It might be cool for some fans, but we're talking about our record. People want a body of work that's really meaningful. I like the humor of things but it was never meant for release."

Outtakes on the album include a "totally lounge" version of the

Jane's Addiction hit "Been Caught Stealing" and a live rendition of the song "Three Days."

"I wanted to find a live version of that song because it came alive live. Every song had its moment. I tried to find the moment for each tune."

As for future Jane's Addiction projects, Perkins said that Porno for Pyros and the Red Hot Chili Peppers take precedence.

"With Porno and the Peppers, we both have work to do and records to make. Mo and Perry

have great plans for Porno for Pyros music. The Jane's tour is only five weeks. Who knows what's going to happen? Who knows how it's going to feel. We're going to have some intense energy packed into two months. We're going to do a bunch of shows, a lot of rehearsals, a lot of press and then it's going to be over. We'll go back to some other stuff, but we could always do it again."

## LOCAL HAUNTS

Here are some local haunts to check out during this scream season.

■ Erwin's Barn of Horrors —

Corner of Silver Lake Road and Pontiac Trail (one mile south of I-96 & Kensington Metro Park, Kent Lake Road Exit 153), South

Lyon, 7:30-10 p.m. Thursday, and Sunday; 7:30 p.m. to midnight, Friday-Saturday, Oct. 30-31 and Nov. 1. Adults \$11, children 12 and under \$8, includes glass of cider and doughnut.

■ Farmington Area Jaycees, Nightmare on Orchard Lake — Orchard Lake Road (south of 14 Mile Road in the parking lot next to Kmart), Farmington Hills, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Thursday and Sunday; 7:30-11:30 p.m., Friday-Saturday, Oct. 23-26 and Oct. 30-31, \$5, (248) 477-5227

■ Tenth Annual Haunted Theatre, presented by the Palace Theatre Company — 35164 West Michigan Ave., (1 block west of Wayne Road, 2 miles east of I-275, Exit 22), Wayne, 7-11 p.m. through Friday, Oct. 31, adults \$5, children 12 and under, \$2.50, (313) 728-SHOW.

■ Haunted Winery, sponsored by Farmington Historical Commission — 31505 Grand River, just west of Orchard Lake Road, Farmington, 7-11 p.m., Friday-Saturday, 7-10 p.m., Sunday-Thursday, Oct. 29 to Nov. 1. Adults \$6, children 12 and under \$3. Family of four (2 adults, 2 children) \$15, (248) 477-8833 (after 5 p.m.).

■ Krazy Hilda's Trail of Terrors — Mary's Farm Market, 47455 Ford Road, (4 miles west of I-275 at the corner of Ford and Beck Roads), Canton, 7-10:30 p.m., Sunday-Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight, Friday-Saturday through Oct. 31. Adults \$6, children 12 and under \$4.50, (313) 495-1108.

■ The Gauntlet — 3645 Highland Road (M-59) two miles west of Telegraph, 1/4 mile west of

Cass Lake Road, Waterford, 7-11 p.m., Sunday-Thursday, 7 p.m. to 1 p.m., Friday-Saturday through Nov. 2, \$12, (248) 682-HAUNT.

■ Tunnel of Terror, sponsored by Rochester Area Jaycees — On Pine St., Rochester Municipal Park parking lot, downtown Rochester (off University near Rochester Road), 7:30-8:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 30; 7:30-11:30 p.m., Friday-Saturday through Nov. 1, \$6, (248) 652-7777.

■ Pipe Screams — 8:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 31, Redford Theatre, 17380 Lahser, north of Grand River, Detroit. The American Guild of Organists and the Motor City Theatre Society will combine to present an evening of musical fun. Outstanding local musicians will perform their favorite fun and spooky musical renditions. No charge, costumes optional.

■ Livonia Jaycees: Haunted Halls of Doom — Wonderland Mall (corner of Plymouth Road and Middlebelt, 1 mile south of I-96), Livonia, 7-11 p.m., Sunday-Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight, Friday-Saturday, through Thursday, Oct. 30. Adults \$5, children under 12, \$3, (313) 632-1161.

■ Plymouth-Canton Jaycees, Haunted Warehouse, 340 N. Main Street, (at the railroad tracks, behind the Plymouth Landing Restaurant), Plymouth 7-11 p.m., Sunday-Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight, Friday-Saturday, through Oct. 31. Adults \$6, children 12 and under \$5, (313) 453-8407.

## SINGLES CALENDAR

■ FARMINGTON SINGLE PROFESSIONALS

■ Farmington Singles and Metropolitan Singles present A Halloween Party/Single Mingle Dance, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Friday, Oct. 31 of The Marriott Hotel, Six Mile East of 275 in Laurel Park Mall, Livonia. Admission is \$7.

■ Co-Ed Dart League 6:15

p.m. every other Sunday at Roosevelt's Billiard Bar and Grill, 27843 Orchard Lake Road at 12 Mile, Farmington Hills. Cost \$5 per week. Subs needed. (810) 851-9909

■ Volleyball 6:40 p.m. Tuesdays at Racquetball Farmington, Nine Mile west of Farmington Road, Farmington. Courts for beginner, intermediate and

advanced. Cost \$4/ members; \$6/ non-members. (810) 851-9909

■ Euchre, Pinochle and Dinner 6:30-10:30 p.m. Mondays at Maples of Novi Golf Course Clubhouse, 14 Mile Road one mile west of Haggerty, \$7/ FSP members, \$8/ non-members.

■ Volleyball 6 p.m. every Tuesday in Heritage Park (Farmington Road, between 10-11 Mile, Farmington Hills. When entering park, stay to right. (248) 851-9909

■ Inline skating/rollerblading 6:15 p.m. every Wednesday meeting at Farmer Jacks on Orchard Street (south of Grand River, east of Farmington Road), Farmington. (248) 9909

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