

Bluesy from page E1

Rather it's across perceived racial and cultural boundaries. Yet clearly, this isn't a play written by a leading African-American playwright such as Pearl Cleage, Eugene Lee or Pearl Youngblood.

Without political rhetoric or racial overtones, "Thunder" offers an entertaining plot, rather than didacticism, said Sherman.

"Prejudice is rooted in ignorance," he said. "Maybe we can offer theater as a way to educate, to get people to open up by understanding where this kind of music comes from."

After watching a production of "Thunder" last year at Center Stage in Baltimore, Sherman studied the script, then called Gary Anderson, former and executive director of Ploshwars

Theatre Company, a small theater group with an exclusive African-American focus in its drama repertoire.

Meadow Brook attempted to collaborate with Ploshwars on August Wilson's "The Piano Lesson" early last season, and finally partnered with the Detroit-based theater group on the audience "I Am A Man" written by OyamO (Charles Gordon), a

Michigan-based playwright who is also on the faculty in the University of Michigan Drama Department.

Based on garbage workers strike, "I Am A Man" was unmistakably confrontational about race and social justice. The play was also a shock and surprise to Meadow Brook's typically reserved audience, many of whom expected the standard

fare of Neil Simon, Lillian Hellman and Arthur Miller.

During the run, Sherman received hate mail. He also noted, however, that he received many letters supporting his decision to produce plays of diverse contemporary playwrights.

In two years, Meadow Brook has made major strides. It wasn't until last year's production of Wilson's "The Piano Lesson" that

the theater presented its first drama by an African-American.

With "Thunder Knocking on the Door," Meadow Brook demonstrates that it'll continue to look to open new theatrical doors for an increasingly diverse audience.

Besides, regardless of race, gender or ethnicity, if you've got pain in your heart and rolling thunder in your veins, then you're a candidate for the blues.

Bugs from page E1

"Bone Appetit Tour" with a "Blue Year's Eve" celebration at the Kingley Inn in Bloomfield Hills.

This year's tour has been dubbed the "Gimme Five Tour." The logo is an oval with bright yellow streaks, white stars, and a manipulated drawing of Mickey Mouse's gloved hand.

"Since it's the 'Gimme Five' tour, we gave him extra fingers."

The 1999 tour will be called "Bone Voyage Tour."

Elusive past

Beddow refused to talk about his or his band's past saying "we're all active members of the witness protection program. We all look forward to the future."

Sources say he was born May 17, 1953, in Detroit to parents Bill and Peg. He picked up the trombone in 1962 and the flute seven years later. Beddow grew up in the "poor section" of Franklin and graduated from Birmingham Groves High School

in 1970.

Although his parents preferred that he become a dentist, Beddow earned a bachelor's degree in music education from Northern-Michigan University in 1975. Upon graduation, he served as the head of the music department at Leland Public Schools for the next two years.

During the late 1970s, he performed with the "party funk R&B" band Newt and the Salamanders. Beddow also spent

time filling in for musicians who supported Maynard Ferguson.

In 1982, he formed a jazz band and cut an album with jazz guitarist Earl Klugh. Accolades came in as Beddow earned Detroit Music Awards for the best trombonist, and his band won best jazz album of 1992 for "Tuda Man."

After 12 years in jazz bands, Beddow changed his tune and dove into the blues.

"People can always connect with singers and words. (With jazz) there's too much sameness, not enough variety," said Beddow, who appeared in the 1992 Oliver Stone film "Hoffa."

"I have five guys to work with. I get every ounce of sound out of them."

The band's sound has given it the opportunity to open for Buckwheat Zydeco in front of 60,000 people at the Dearborn Homecoming Festival Aug. 2,

1997, and to share the stage with Lennie Brooks, Spyro Gryn, Boz Scaggs, Eddie Money and Robert Cray.

For the last three baseball seasons, Beddow has played the national anthem at Tiger Stadium. The band has also performed as part of the OCA Cable TV Awards for Southeastern Michigan since the show's inception 13 years ago.

For 1998, the Bugs Beddow Band already has 23 of the year booked but "we've left some options open," he said.

He and his band - guitarist/vocalist Jason Hinz, saxophonist/vocalist James Morse, drummer/vocalist Jim Pryor, and electric and string bassist/vocalist Don Turner - are hoping to perform in Belgium, Aruba and Australia this year.

"We met some people who were involved in the Detroit auto

show (the North American International Auto Show) last year. They hired the band for a private party and they want to bring us to Belgium," he said.

"None of them may pan out. Those are just things on the burner. Money is always a factor."

The band is going to spend the next six months "bashing out" new songs that will be included on the "Gimme Five" album, which will be recorded in June. While "Bone Appetit" was all covers, "Gimme Five" will include all original songs.

"It will have the signature Beddow sense of humor. There's nothing really deep there. We play sincerely, accurately and full of feeling. We're by no means a traditional blues band. We're the blues band of the '90s."

"We like to make people laugh and dance. We accomplish both of those at shows."

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

General Cinemas  
Bargain Matinee daily plus \$1.25 (11-5:45) Show Daily

Capitol  
Ford Rd., 3 mi west of I-75 • 241-1900  
Advance same-day tickets available  
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POSTMAN (R)  
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POSTMAN (R)  
AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN PARIS (R)

Reggie Twin Cinema  
Orchard Lake Rd. at East Lake Rd. • 482-1900  
All Shows 11:30-5:00 p.m.  
\$12.99 AFTER 6 PM  
DEEP FANONIC BURGERS 10/10  
Family Matinee Fri. 3:40-5:00 PM

THE LITTLE MERMAID (G)  
AIR FORCE ONE (R)  
THE BAKKAR (PG-13)

National Amusements  
Showcase Cinemas

Showcase  
Auburn Hills 1-14  
2150 N. Oakdale Rd.  
Between University & Walton  
Bldg.  
810-373-2660  
Bargain Matinee Daily  
All Shows until 6 p.m.  
Continuous Show Daily  
Late Show Wed. Thurs. Fri. & Sat.

JACKIE BROWN (R)  
MR. MAGDOO (PG)  
AMERICAN WEREWOLF (R)  
POSTMAN (R)  
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)  
TOMORROW NEVER DIES (PG-13)  
MOUSE HUNT (PG)  
SCREAM (R)  
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FLUBBER (PG)  
AMASTASIA (G)

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MOUSEHUNT (PG)  
HOME ALONE 3 (PG)  
ALLEN RESURRECTION (R)  
EYES BEYOND (G)  
THE BAKKAR (PG-13)

United Artists Oakland  
Inside Oakland Mall  
810-585-7041

AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)  
MR. MAGDOO (PG)  
SCREAM 2 (R)  
AIR FORCE ONE (R)  
FAIRY TALE (PG)

Waterford Cinema II  
3501 Highland Rd.  
S.E. corner 44 St. & Village Lake  
Rd.  
24 Hour Movie Line  
(810) 666-7900  
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AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)  
AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN PARIS (R)  
TOMORROW NEVER DIES (PG-13)  
MOUSEHUNT (PG)  
TITANIC (PG-13)  
HOME ALONE 3 (PG)  
SCREAM 2 (R)  
FOR RICHER OR POORER (PG-13)  
FLUBBER (PG)  
AMASTASIA (G)

Terrace Cinema  
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313-261-3330  
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\*All Shows \$1.50  
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After 6 p.m. \$1.50  
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SCREEN SCENE

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

Detroit Film Theatre Detroit  
Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward  
Ave., Detroit, Cal (313) 833-2323  
for information.

"Underground" (France/Germany 1995), 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9; 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 10-11. When a man wakes up 60 years after the end of World War II, he discovers that his beloved Yugoslavia no longer exists. Tito, Grand Prize winner at the 1995 Cannes festival finally makes it overseas.

"Mondo" (France-1997), 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12. A gypsy boy on the streets of Nice sees the world as a magic, otherworldly place. From Tony Gatlif, the director of the gypsy music tribute "Latcho Drom."

Main Art Theatre 118 N. Main Street at 11 Mile, Royal Oak. Films play through at least Thursday, unless noted otherwise. Call (248) 542-0180 for information. (\$6.50; \$4 students, seniors and matinee; \$3 twilight) "Wings of the Dove"

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Britain-1997). More Henry James. This time the turn-of-the-century romantic entanglement occurs between a conniving woman (Helena Bonham Carter) and a handsome journalist (Liam Neeson). They devise a plan to have him work a dying woman and thus inherit her fortune.

"The Sweet Hereafter" (Canada-1997). A study in collective mourning from Canadian director Atom Egoyan in which an entire town feels the pain when most of its children are killed in a school bus accident.

an Observer & Eccentric Contest!

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1. Complete the crossword puzzle.
2. Write your name, age and address on the entry blank and mail the crossword puzzle and the entry blank to: 1-2-3 Imagine, c/o Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia, MI 48150.
3. Only one entry per child.
4. 15 winners will be selected at random and each winner will receive four free tickets to SESAME STREET LIVE's production of 1-2-3 Imagine when it appears at the Fox Theatre on Thursday, January 22, 1998. Plus four lucky winners will be selected to go backstage to meet one of the Sesame Street Live Muppet Characters!
5. All entries must be received by 12 noon Friday, January 15, 1998.
6. Winners will be contacted by phone on Friday, January 16, 1998 between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m., and all winners will be announced in the paper on Sunday, January 23, 1998 in the Classifieds section.

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