

MUSIC

The 'King' returns to sing with symphony

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Elvis is alive and singing with the Livonia Symphony Orchestra.

OK, Kelly Boesel is not really Elvis Presley, and he actually won't be performing with the orchestra, but between their segments in a benefit concert and all-out celebration on March 6, Boesel will rock the house, with Elvis tunes such as "Don't Be Cruel," "Teddy Bear" and "Suspicious Minds."

The orchestra and conductor Volodymyr Schesliuk invite you to join them for this festive evening, cabaret style.

"We're characterizing it as our 26th anniversary party, so we'll have champagne on all the tables," said Bob Bennett, Livonia Symphony president.

This is Boesel's first performance with an orchestra. A used car salesman by day, the Waterford resident puts on his jumpsuit evenings and weekends to

Cabaret Concert

What: The Livonia Symphony Orchestra performs a variety of selections ranging from "Don Giovanni" to light classics and Elvis tunes at its annual benefit concert.

When: 7 p.m. Friday, March 6.

Where: Burton Manor, 27777 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia.

Cost: Tickets are \$25, and available at the Livonia Civic Center Library Gift Shop or by calling (734) 421-1111/464-2741.

become a hunk of "Burning Love" at clubs and senior centers around town.

"In 1963, me and my uncle went to see 'Viva, Las Vegas' and I've been an Elvis fan ever since," said the 41-year-old

singer. "Later, I won first place at a talent show impersonating Elvis and I've been on my way ever since."

Board member Rose Kachnowski first saw Boesel perform as Elvis at a 50th anniversary celebration for Madonna University.

"I, of course, grew up in the Elvis era and saw him in person," said Kachnowski. "We asked Kelly to perform just for the fun of it. The cabaret is fun. We want to make sure everybody has fun. We'll have a smattering of music from light classic to show tunes and pop."

Joining Boesel on the guest roster is soprano Liz Mihalo and baritone Sachal Vasandani singing something a little "heavier," a duet from "Don Giovanni." Mihalo, a freshman at the University of Michigan School of Music, will make her debut as a soloist with a symphony orchestra although she's soloed with the Catholic Central Jazz Band.

Mihalo is a graduate of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills where she studied with Lawrence Teevens and was a member of the Mercyaires. In just a few short years, Mihalo's become a veteran performer. She's toured Germany, Austria, France and The Netherlands as part of the Blue Lake International Choral Ensemble in 1995.

A native of Livonia, Mihalo participated in the All-State Choir program at Interlochen Arts Camp last summer and received first place vocal scholarships in 1995 and 1996. Her senior year at Mercy, she studied voice with Francis Brockington at Wayne State University and presently takes classes with Willis Patterson at School of Music in Ann Arbor. She has acted in several Mercy High School musicals and a Nancy Gurewin production of "Fiddler on the Roof."

"I've been singing since forever, but studying voice since I was in high school," said Mihalo. "It's good to be nervous in that you care about your performance."

Vocal talent seems to run in Mihalo's family. Mother Carol Mihalo is choir director at Marian High School in Bloomfield Hills. Father Daniel sings with the Schoolcraft College Community Choir. Liz, a cantor at St. Collete Church in Livonia, frequently performs with her mother at weddings, funerals and masses at various churches in the Detroit metropolitan area.

"I will always be singing in churches," said Mihalo. "It's always important to give back your talent to God and Community."

For 23 years, the Livonia Symphony held Young Artist Competitions to spotlight emerging talent. The past two years lack of funding prohibited the orchestra from holding an official contest

but continues to support young musicians and vocalists by featuring them in their concerts.

"We're always highlighting young talent," said Kachnowski. "The key factor with holding the competitions was money for the prizes. We hope eventually to reinstate the competitions."

Now in its 25th season, the Livonia Symphony Orchestra, prior to 1988, was known as the Oakway Symphony, short for Oakland and Wayne counties from which its members hailed. Today, it's composed of about 75 professional and semiprofessional musicians from a number of area communities.

"This is a fund-raiser," said Kachnowski. "People will be able to bid on conducting the orchestra. It costs a lot of money to put on concert. We're so fortunate to have a community orchestra. We'd like to see as many members of the community come out and support the orchestra. It's their orchestra as well."


Classical guitarist plays at Madonna

International concert guitarist Fabio Zanon and special guest Victor Antonio Sakaluska, a concert classic guitarist, will be featured in recital 8 p.m. Saturday, Mar. 14 in Kresge Hall at Madonna University, 36600 Schoolcraft (I-96) and Levon, Livonia.

Tickets are \$14.50 in advance, \$16 at the door, and available by calling (248) 975-8797.

Brazilian guitarist Fabio Zanon came to international prominence in 1996 when he won first prize in the 30th Francisco Tarrega International Competition, the most prestigious guitar competition in Europe.

Sakaluska, a Michigan native and graduate of Madonna University, earned his bachelor's degree under Helene Rottenborg in 1996. He debuted as a soloist with the Livonia Symphony Orchestra the same year. He has also performed at the Kresge Town Concert House in Ann Arbor.



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