

Riverdance from page E2

a stand-up comedian. That's not what we're about," he said. "We're satirists, iconoclastic, irreverent. We do sketch comedy with an ensemble, and work in songs."

"Audiences are familiar with what happens on Mainstage, and on the road when the Touring Company comes to their town, but there's more to Second City - Detroit than that."

"Second City - Detroit takes comedy seriously, and offers a variety of classes, and programs for businesses."

"We want to offer something for everyone," said Wade. "We're looking at creating programs for young people, a two week summer day camp, and an abbreviated off-site program for adults. It's fun, a chance to play, and the skills are valuable in so many ways of life."

"You learn to be more creative, how to work as a team, new creative ways of solving problems. Skits are a journey to find solutions to problems. You gain confidence performing, and become an active listener - listening is vital to our work."

Improvisational comedy, which challenges the audience to use their imagination, and the cast theirs, was a freeing experience for Wade.

"When it's done in a safe, trusting environment it's a chance to freely speak ideas, to share with the audience and the people on stage," he said. "We ask you to come on stage and

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Marc Warzecha
troupe member

play. We spend all our lives not doing that."

The pressure is on, but Wade is having a great time. "It's very exciting to watch a production take shape," he said. "To see a kernel of vision become a show."

Pories brings a wealth of experience to the Mainstage. "She's a fine improviser and has had a rich and multi-faceted life, which is important. She's a tireless worker, and very funny."

As the show continues, there will be subtle changes. "It evolves as the actors find more effective ways to steer the message," said Wade. "We're open to making changes. We're a team, and we must be the voice of the community."

The 3rd Level

The 3rd Level Improv Troupe, performing Sundays, and headlining Thursday-Sunday, March 12-15, at Joe's Comedy Club in Livonia, is a different voice in the community.

Marc Warzecha, Joe Gillis, Angie Potvin, Jeff Fritz, Michael Lomas, Billy Zakolski, and Mary Lindsay met at Second City -

Detroit while taking classes together.

They got along well together, and after completing their "third level" of classes, decided to start their own troupe.

"I personally like the spontaneity of improv, and the challenge of doing something different every night, and playing off the audience," said Warzecha a member of The Second City - Detroit touring company. "You hear something on the news and you can work it into a skit. You get to say a lot, maybe make a point about the world around you, sometimes it's funny. I really like that aspect of it."

Third Level has been performing together since April. Warzecha said he had a very good experience at Second City, and improv is something he really enjoys doing.

"Our troupe has something unique and different to offer," he said. "We are all between the ages of 21 and 26, we're younger, and this gives us a different perspective. We take more chances, we're definitely the most spontaneous of the major improv groups in the area such as Totally Unrehearsed Theatre."

Like Second City - Detroit, Third Level is planning to offer improv classes.

Final details are being worked out, and Warzecha said classes are scheduled to start the end of March, and meet Sundays. You can call (313) 438-1381 for more information.

One-act from page E1

early, or stay up late to write. "When I get on a creative streak I wake up at 3:30 or 4:30 and write."

She and her husband, Jim, have been married 23 years. Jim is planning a party for her after the show.

"They're excited," said Feldt. "We have 30 people, my immediate family, coming opening night. My oldest will watch the younger ones, and I'll be taking her and a girlfriend to the show the next day."

Feldt said she would like to take some classes to grow as a writer. "When you enjoy something the learning comes easy."

Graham wants the festival to be just that - a learning experience for playwrights and directors.

There will be a talk back after

each performance so the audience can comment on the plays.

In addition to the original one acts, the Guild will be presenting one published work, "The Actor's Nightmare," by Christopher Duran. Tony Lawry of Garden City will direct.

"The festival is good," said Ripper. "We bring in new talent, writers, directors and actors."

One-Act Play Slam

Birmingham based Heartland Theatre Company is hosting its first One-Act Play Slam at Cadieux Cafe in Detroit on March 2.

In addition to short plays that will be presented, the evening will be emceed by the improv troupe Void Where Prohibited.

The slam is open to all writers and would be writers. Writers

can reserve a performance slot in advance by calling the number listed in the chart, or sign in at the door.

Writers may provide their own actors or use any of the "six brilliant" actors (3 men and 3 women) provided by Heartland Theatre Company, or enlist anyone in the audience "foolish enough to volunteer."

A randomly selected panel of judges will "score" the material using any criteria they like.

Plays should take more than 10 minutes to perform. Food and beverages will be sold at Cadieux Cafe during the evening.

Proceeds from the evening will help support "Playscape '98" - Heartland's annual festival of original full-length plays.

Hercules from page E1

"It helps us move the choreography," explained Matsunaga. "We're able to switch scenes as the show continues so the flow is smooth and fluid."

To separate villains from heroes, Disney made them big. The Titans (Ice, Earth, Lava and Wind) and other oversized bad guys are portrayed by performers, some on stilts, who are not wearing skates.

"We did not cast skaters for some of these roles, but rather used people who are accustomed to performing in large, heavy body costumes," said Jerry Blik, creative director.

Like other Disney on Ice productions, Hercules is larger than life.

"We have several special effects," said Matsunaga. We use pyrotechnics and fireworks to help Hades express his rage when he's getting upset. The sound and lighting are special too."

You'll forget Hercules' pal Pegasus, the winged wonder horse, is a prop. "He moves and flaps his wings as Hercules rides him," said Matsunaga.

Costumes, sets and choreography also have a role in conveying



Ice Show:
Hercules and his pal Pegasus, a gift from his father Zeus, are flying high in the new Feld Entertainment production of Disney on Ice - Hercules.

the story to audiences.

Hercules and Meg's costumes were designed after extensive historical research and a perusal of Greek mythology. An iridescent cape underlined in bright reds, oranges and yellows accentuates the fiery temper of Hades.

In keeping with the movie version, Phil is a comic. The skating is acrobatic and incorporates

handsprings and back flips. The muses dance their way through the show to the beat of the 1950s Motown sound.

"We've found that people forget they're at an ice show," said Matsunaga. "They're drawn into the story, and before they know it, the story is over, because the performers were doing their job."

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