

THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



Rockabilly star Ronnie Dawson, whose song "Yum, Yum, Yum" appeared in the film "Primary Colors," performs at 9 p.m. at the Mill Street Entry below Clutch Cargo's, 65 E. Huron, Pontiac. Tickets \$10 in advance for the 18 and older show. (248) 333-2362 or <http://www.961melt.com>

SATURDAY



"Classic Soul" concert featuring the Stylistics, Dramatics, Chi-Lites, Cuba Gooding and the Main Ingredient, Delfonics and Major Harris, 8 p.m. at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$35 and \$27.50, call (248) 433-1515 or (313) 953-6611.

SUNDAY



"Rent" continues at the Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Boulevard, Detroit. Tickets \$26-\$60. Curtain 7:30 p.m., call (248) 645-6666.

MOT TICKET



Hot Tip: The fifth annual Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, through Saturday, June 20, features pianist James Tocco, and other internationally known musicians, performing at seven different venues. Call (248) 362-6171 for more information, and to order tickets. Tickets also available at Ticketmaster, (248) 645-6666. See concert schedule inside.



Rehearsing: Jamie Richards (left to right), Nicki Stacey and Peggy Lee perform in "Into the Woods."

ST. DUNSTAN'S TAKES AUDIENCES

'INTO THE WOODS'

Go "Into the Woods" with the St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild as they present Stephen Sondheim's award-winning musical in Cranbrook's outdoor Greek Theatre.

With a book by James Lapine, "Into the Woods" is Sondheim's "sophisticated take on fairy-tales," said director Amy Lynn Smith of Birmingham. "What are the ramifications, good and bad of having a dream come true?"

Join the Baker, his wife, Cinderella, the Witch, Jack and Little Red Riding Hood as they venture "Into the Woods."

"They're not caricatures, they're realistic people facing choices," explained Smith. "There are a lot of lessons, fun and energy."

Jamie Richards stars as the Baker. "I'm a huge, huge Sondheim fan," said Richards. "I love the complexity, the beauty of his music. It teaches me in a way that no one else does."

Richards believes "Into the Woods" is the perfect production for the outdoor Greek theater. "The show takes place in the woods, and the

"Into the Woods"

PRESENTED BY: St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook

WHEN: 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 5-6; Thursday-Saturday, June 11-13; and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 7.

WHERE: Outdoor Greek Theatre, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills.

TICKETS: General Admission \$15. Seniors and Students, \$12. Call (248) 644-0527.

characters are very familiar. Even if you're not familiar with the show, you'll know the characters."

He's seen the show four times and is enjoying his character. "He's dependent and grows to be independent," explained Richards. "There's a lot of humor and good drama, there are so many levels at play, which is fun, and the music is amazing. It's like a dream to be singing some of these songs."

Nicki Stacey is the Baker's Wife. She and Richards performed together in another Sondheim show "Merrily We Roll Along," presented by St. Dunstan's in 1995.

"We're having a good time playing together," said Stacey. "This is a fun part. I like the humor of the show and the ties to real life. Everyone should be able to relate to it."

Stacey also enjoys performing outdoors. "It's beautiful," she said. "I love it. As an actor you have to remember the audience is all around you. Before it gets dark, and the lights come on, you can make eye contact with the people in the audience. You can connect immediately with the audience, and see how they're responding."

This show utilizes the entire theater - the stage, aisles, grass. "Amy makes the audience feel like they're in the woods with the characters. It makes it more real," said Richards.

To help tell the story, Ann DeMay of Clark-

Please see WOODS, E2

'Porgy & Bess' well staged, hard to hear

'Porgy & Bess'

WHAT: The Michigan Opera Theatre production of the Gershwin "Porgy & Bess"

WHERE: The Detroit Opera House, (at the corner of Madison Avenue and Broadway, one block east of Woodward Avenue), Detroit.

WHEN: 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, June 4-6; Wednesday-Saturday, June 10-13; 7:30 p.m. Sunday, June 7 and 14 and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 7 and 14.

TICKETS: \$18-\$95, (248) 645-6666, or (313) 874-SING (7464).



Peabo Bryson

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

The Michigan Opera Theatre production of "Porgy & Bess" conveys the strong, languorous sensuality and the deep-rooted core of community that are the essential tension in what is often hailed as America's only great opera.

But the MOT production also raises some of the questions that have always swirled around this great work, both musical and sociological.

Director Tazewell Thompson's production emphasizes the community of Catfish Row, the black dock-

side quarter of Charleston, S.C., in the 1920s. It is a community rooted in fundamentalist Christianity, with a touch of old-style superstition. It is also a poor community plagued with the usual, and still surviving, scourges of escape - gambling, alcohol, easy sex and drugs.

Kenneth Foy's sets, though a bit shaky at times, convey the ramshackle community perfectly.

This is a story of the unconditional love of the crippled beggar Porgy for the sensual, irresponsible and drug-addicted Bess. It is also the story of how a community comes together in hard times and against all odds.

The "Porgy & Bess" problems are two-fold. The sociological problem is easy to dismiss. Many in the black community have actually called the opera demeaning to blacks, a work by white people about things they don't understand. Compared to current rap music and film and television portrayals of the black community, "Porgy & Bess" is enlightened, compassionate and true. It's characters are flawed, but its portrayal of unconditional love and abiding community are a positive view of poor people struggling with and overcoming

Please see PORGY & BESS, E2

MOVIES

Weir spreads the faith about 'The Truman Show'

BY JOHN MONAGHAN
SPECIAL WRITER

By now, most movie-goers know what "The Truman Show" is about. And that's just the way Peter Weir likes it. The director's recent visit to Detroit was part of a major studio campaign to spread the faith about "Truman," a modern fable which has been hailed by many critics as a "near masterpiece."

Jim Carrey stars as Truman Burbank, a regular guy who, unbeknownst to him, has had his life broadcast on television almost since his inception.

Friends and family are actually actors fed lines and stage directions through tiny ear pieces. The island community he resides in, Seahaven, is just a giant domed soundstage with painted clouds and fake facades.

Aside from presenting such a complex story, Weir has accomplished another miracle: settling rubber-faced comedian Carrey down long enough to deliver the performance of his career. (Weir has experience, guiding Robin

Please see TRUMAN, E2



Filmmaking: Peter Weir (right) and Jim Carrey (left) on the set of "The Truman Show."