Musician from page E1

Schoolcraft.

"I stuck with the band and had no intention of being a university professor or even getting a degree," he said.

Covach dabbled in music classification.

Couch dabbled in music class-es at Wayne State University while trying to make it in the business. But things never jelled. Many friends went to Los Ange-les with big dreams and returned without success. Also, his progressive rock style was giving way to the more stripped down punk and new wave sounds.

wounds. and now wave sounds.
"At that point, I thought this life on the road wasn't right for mer I thought, do I really care what these 15-year-olds think and the answer was no," he said. Covach went on to get a doctorate degree at the University of Michigan, with a dissertation on 12-tone music, which he had stidlied as a Fulbright scholar in Vigna.

ignna. But he never abandoned his

"At the end of graduate school there was a lot of interest in popular music, but they didn't know a lot about it. There was a feeling that it could revitalize musically. I had a history in popular music and could speak the language of ecademia," he said. "Understanding Rock" was an outgrowth of those interests, though when the idea for a serious musicological study of rock was first proposed it seemed revolutionary.
"None of us was tenured at the time and we didn't know if this would be good for our careers or would hold us back. But it took five years to get it published and it's not as risky now as it was then," Coxch said.

The book consists of seven cssays on various aspects of rock music from a technical, musical approach. Subjects, include the Grateful Deads "Dark Stan," the music of Paul Simon, the experiments of Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys, the transformation

of the blues by Cream and even an analysis of how k.d. lang changed the meaning of Joans Sommer's "Johnny Get Angry." Covach contributes an essay on the progressive rock group Yes and how their music relates to the classical art song tradition.

"The distinction I have from

The distinction I have roun the other writers is that I'm probably the one guy who is the most reluctant scholar. If it turned out I could have stayed in the music, I would have," Covach

the music, I would nave, 'Covan's rock music classes have attracted the attontion of the local media and the students. His history of rock class, a broad rock appreciation course, drew 237 atudents even thought the limit was 200. The class includes listening to 10 90-minute tapes and having to identify groups, types of music and year released by listening to a brief excerpt. It covers every influence from blues and country-western to Frank Sinatra.

Covach also teaches classes for music majors. This fall he'll teach a class on the concept album including the Beatles' seminal 'Sgt. Peppor' and Pink Floyd's "Tho Wall." Covach said that most rock criticism has been more sociological than musical. He said he offers a legitimate and different approach. As a musicologist, he said, he can explain the "how" of music.

anid, he can explain the "how" of music.

He is currently working on a book, "Rock Music Comes of Age," about rock music in the 1970s.

"It's a very hot issue, a lot of folks don't think there's any value in thinking in terms of music, that it makes rock like classical music, an elitist thing. If it's in an academic setting, it is somewhat clietts," his said.

Covach and his wile, Julie, also a Livonia native, have two sons, Ricky, 10, and John, 4. They return to Livonia each year to visit family.

Theater from page E1



Rock writer: John Covach enjoys teach-ing, but he loves rock and roll.

Comedy from page E1

musical per year.

They're currently working on Greecers, an original book and musical commissioned by Contemporary Drama Service.

At day jobs - for now

At day jobs - for now
Vigilant and Castle's collaboration has evolved since they
first set a melodrama to music
Il years ago, and performed the
piece at the Golden Lion Theatre
in Detroit.
Since then, they've been commissioned by Pioneer Drama
Service and Contemporary
Drama Service. Their work
includes setting music to familint stories such as "The Little
Star," "Twos the Night Before,"

"King Midas and the Palace of Gold," "The Attack of the Killer Grasshoppers," and "Jungle Book."

Grasshoppers, and Junges
Book."
That prolific output is even
more impressive when considering that Vigilant and Castle both
have day jobs and families.
And yes, they both are happin
married.
"Relationships are very fragile.
They can fall apart easily when
you become selfish," said Castle
of Warren, who works in customer service at Blue Cross/Blue
Shield of Michigan.
When focusing on writing, Castle will memorize the lyrics and
take walks at work to contemplate a melody. He'll work out

the song on guitar. An accomplished musician, Castle also performs locally with The Reel Happy Swing and String Band and The Dennis Cyperyn Band. Meanwhile, Vigitant's day lot doesn't take him far from his love of theater. He's public relations director for Meadow Broot Theatre, where, he confesses, the busy work often loaves little time to write his own play.

But like Castle, he invariably finds time.

But like Castle, he invariably finds time.

"I get moody when I don't write, so my wife and I work it out so there's time (for my writing)," he said.

And at the sound of the bell, the writing begins.

"Pinocchio," and "Wizard of Oz." and that's why Wagman chooses to present classics. You wou've never seen these shows before. "They're original musicals," she said. "I have an outstanding stable of composers, actors, and directors." Classics also have vitality, they're timeless, other good reasons to present them. Her audiences range from four to 12, but, probably because the shows are presented during the day, she draws a lot of senior citizens too.

"The audience knows what happens going in," she said." They have expectations, and we help these kids meet them. We

have full appreciation for these timeless classics. People just love the magic, and the stories are ancient."

American Family Theater trav-

American Family Theater trav-cles around the country present-ing children's shows at places-like Meadow Brook, and in schools. Earlier this summer they presented "Beauty and the Beast," at Meadow Brook.

"We travel with full-blown sets" anid Wagman. "They tend to move and awitch in front of people's eyes. We have all kinds of yummy special effects that we can pull out of our hat." She makes no distinction between professional "adult" the-

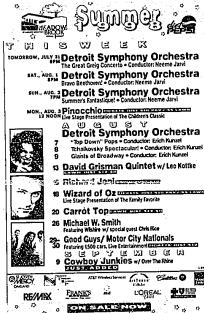
ater and children's theater.
"Good theater is good theater and good acting is good acting, ahe said." There should be good, solid content, and seriousness of purpose in your presentation. We have the same intent and feel it should got the respect it deserves."

should got the respect it deserves.

One of the greatest compliments ever paid to Wagman and a staff happened after a show. The audience was arguing if the people waiting for the bus to pick them up after the show were the same, people on stage. They didn't know if they were real actors on stage or puppets with music boxes. That's one of the wenders of what we do."







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Sax man: Veteran Detroit jazz musician George Benson will perform 7:45 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 6, on the Ford Touch Cellular Stage at the Montreux Jazz Festival