

THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



Alan Thicke and Stephanie Pope star in "Chicago - The Musical," 8 p.m. at the Fisher Theatre, in the Fisher Building, Detroit. Tickets \$38-\$62, call (313) 871-1132 or (248) 645-6666.

SATURDAY



"Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk," 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Masonic Temple Theatre, 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$22.50-\$39.50, call (248) 645-6666 or (313) 872-1000.

SUNDAY



The Renaissance Festival ends today with the third annual Tournament of Temptations, and other "Sweet Endings," 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The festival is located off I-75 on Dixie Highway (between Pontiac and Flint). Call (800) 601-4848 for information.

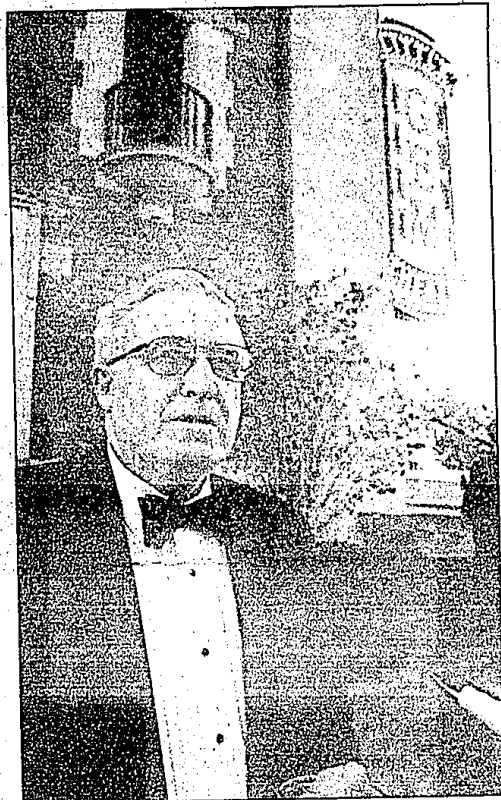
ADULT TICKET



Hot Tix: All aboard for Railroad Days, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 26-27 at Greenfield Village in Dearborn. Experience what life was like working and traveling on the railroad. Visitors will see special train demonstrations and vintage steam, diesel and electric trains in action. Call (313) 271-1620 for details.

Resetting the jewel

Spirited new show reopens the Gem Theatre



Preservationist: Gem Theatre owner Chuck Forbes of Troy outside the newly moved theater on Madison Avenue in downtown Detroit.

BY FRANK PROVENZANO
STAFF WRITER

Two weeks ago, the lone bagpiper stationed at the entrance to the newly moved Gem Theatre followed the arrival of guests at the grand reopening celebration of the historic venue saved from the wrecking ball.

Over the last year, the 5.5-million-pound Gem Theatre was moved, literally, five blocks southwesterly from its former location across from the Fox Theatre to Madison Avenue, a short jaunt to Music Hall and Detroit Opera House, and the future neighborhood of two multi-million sports stadiums.

In short order, the endemic pipe sounds of Scotland accompanied the entrances of about 450 of Gem owner Chuck Forbes' closest friends.

Forbes of Troy initially renovated and opened the Gem Theatre on New Year's Eve 1991. Apparently, the crowd of Who's Who in the arts, corporate world and philanthropic community

know that the real star wasn't the 71-year-old theater but the man who stood on the stage before a preview performance of "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change," and thanked everyone for supporting the \$1.5-million move, which is listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the heaviest structure moved on rubber tires.

Other than perhaps the Ilitch family, few others have shown the commitment and vision for the renewal of Detroit than Forbes.

It's his decision in the early 1980s to buy, refurbish and rent

Please see GEM, E2



Michael Tilson Thomas
Music director, San Francisco Symphony

Gershwin's birthday tour comes to town

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

Strike up the band! "Swonderful, 'smarvelous, 'sGeorge Gershwin's 100th birthday Saturday and the band is coming to Ann Arbor.

On Sunday, the San Francisco Symphony under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas, will bring a touring celebration of the composer to the University of Michigan's Hill Auditorium.

Born Jacob Gershwitz on Sept. 26, 1898, in Brooklyn, N.Y., Gershwin created music that has become a part of the American fabric. His songs, often with brilliant and witty lyrics by his older brother, Ira, his larger, jazz-inspired orchestral works; and the folk opera "Porgy and Bess" have been accorded the highest stature, with many hailing Gershwin as the quintessential American composer.

For Michael Tilson Thomas, it's personal.

"His family knew the Gershwins in New York," said John Engelkes, bass trombonist with the symphony. "Michael's dad knew him very well and he talks about that at rehearsals. He mentions how his grandfather knew the Gershwins, and he passes that on."

Tilson's Thomas' grandparents, Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky, were founders of the Yiddish Theater in America and knew Gershwin's parents, who were Russian emigres. George Gershwin gave Tilson Thomas' father his first piano lesson.

But Gershwin belongs to everyone and the San Francisco Symphony is part of a national celebration of the great composer and his music. Hill Auditorium is the last stop in a series of symphony events that began in San Francisco Sept. 23 and includes stops at New York's Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on the birth date.

The celebration also includes the release Sept. 15 of a superb 2-CD album on BMG Classics and a television broadcast of the Carnegie Gala on PBS at 9 p.m. Wednesday Sept. 30.

Why all the fuss? "I guess as a player I've always liked Gershwin's music a lot," said Engelkes, reached at his home in San Francisco. "It's something that represents a crossover of jazz, popular and classical music. It's fun to play and part of our culture. It has a sound to it... And we're opening the Carnegie Hall season with Gershwin's con-

Please see TOUR, E2

POPULAR MUSIC

Label head sees Kid Rock as a 'major star'

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Kid Rock is sitting in the industry nightclub's Saroki Room looking through the pouring rain coming down on the "Warped Tour" concert across the street.

The long-haired braided rapper is preparing to debut songs off his upcoming album "Devil Without a Cause" (Lava/Atlantic), but the rain posed a threat to his performance.

Just as Kid Rock takes the stage, the sun appears and thousands of baggy pants-wearing skaters and midriff-baring teen girls begin jumping in the flooded Pontiac parking lot.

His amalgamation of rap and rock goes over well with the soaking wet crowd but unfortunately it blends in with other acts doing the same sort of music.

But long before the Deftones, Rage Against the Machine, and the "Judgment Night" soundtrack which paired up the likes of Cypress Hill and Pearl Jam, Biohazard and Oxxx, and Helmet and House of Pain, Kid Rock was messing with the formula.

"I took it to rock radio, and they said there was too much rap in it," Kid Rock said about his previous albums. "Now

WHO: Kid Rock and Twisted Drown

Trucker, with special guests Budina Fulla Rymaz and BTK

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25

WHERE: State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

HOW: Tickets are \$15 in advance for the all-ages show. For more information call (313) 963-5451 or (248) 645-6666. Kid Rock's website is <http://www.kidrock.com>

people are getting it. I think they saw everybody starting to fuse it and it opened the market."

The first single, "I Am the Bullgod," is proving that point. It's gotten across-the-board play on each end of the dial from CIMX-FM (88.7) to WXDG-FM (105.1).

"Kid Rock is going to be a major star," said Jason Flom, president of Lava Records.

"I love Kid Rock. I love his music. I love him personally. I love everything about him. The band is tight, and to me his record is going to be an extremely important rock record. I consider it a hard rock record even though he raps on it."

"It's important in that, in terms of a one to 10, I give it a 10. I don't think there's that many records that come out that you can listen to start to finish and every song blows you away. I think he's fused rap and rock in a way that only he can."

Kid Rock, a Royal Oak resident, began his career as a high school student. Diving parties in Mount Clemens. In 1988 his demo tapes earned him a spot opening for Boogie Down Productions.

Please see KID ROCK, E2



Coming home: Kid Rock, known to his mother as Bob Ritchie, plays the State Theatre Friday, Sept. 25, in support of his latest album, "Devil Without a Cause" (Lava/Atlantic).