

On stage: Jennifer Allie (left to right), Kerry Plague, Alan Madeleine, Margaret Gilles, Hank Bennett, Anju Chopra and Thomas Adams in a scene from the SRO Productions presentation of "The Wisdom of Eve."

Theaters have lively schedule

They've been rehearsing for months, now it's show time for community theater groups throughout metro Detroit.

Here's what's opening this weekend at a community theater near you.

SRO Productions presents Mary Orr's drama "The Wisdom of Eve," 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, May 14-30 at the City of Southfield's historic center, "The Burgh," in the renovated 1864 church on the northeast corner of Civic Center Dr. and Berg Road, one block east of Telegraph. Tickets are \$8 general admission, \$7 senior adults and children. Call (248) 827-0701 for tickets or information.

"The Wisdom of Eve" was adapted from the book by Mary Orr, and was the basis for the film "All About Eve," and "The Musical Applause."

The play takes an "inside" look at Broadway stardom. This is a

biting comedy with mesmerizing drama.

Village Players

This Friday, the Village Players will begin a three-week run of Eugene O'Neill's "Long Day's Journey Into Night," directed by Linda Hammell.

Performances 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 14-15; May 21-22; and May 28-29; 2 p.m. Sunday, May 16 and May 23 at the Village Players of Birmingham, 752 Chestnut, (one block south of Maple, and one block east of Woodward Ave.) Tickets \$12, call (248) 644-2075.

The play, set in August of 1912, was first performed three years after O'Neill's death in 1953. In a catalogue of plays distinguished by emotional and intellectual depth, and experimentation, "Long Day's Journey Into Night" is perhaps the playwright's most autobiographical

work.

Stagecrafters

Stagecrafters presents the final Main Stage show of the 1998-99 season, "Crazy for You," featuring music and lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin, book by Ken Ludwig, May 14 through June 6 at the historic Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak. Performances 8 p.m. with the exception of 2 p.m. Sunday. There will be one evening Sunday performance, 7 p.m. on May 23.

Tickets are \$12-\$14, call (248) 541-6430. A special dinner theater package is available from Illusions Bar & Grill in downtown Royal Oak, call (248) 686-1313.

Crazy for you was inspired, loosely, by the 1930 Gershwin musical "Girl Crazy."

Fireballs from page E1

Charles and he told me he had some songs filed away that he wanted me to hear," Bunkley added matter of factly.

The Atomic Fireballs are celebrating the release of their Lava/Atlantic debut "Torch This Place," due in stores Tuesday, May 18 - the same day the group appears on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien." The Atomic Fireballs have also set a CD release party and performance for Sunday, May 23, at the Magic Stick in Detroit.

"Torch This Place" kicks off mercilessly with Bunkley's scat-like shouts accompanied by hand-claps before bursting into the full-throttle jump blues of "Man with the Hex," the album's first single. "Caviar and Chittlins" swings, while "Hit By a Brick" is straight from the soundtrack to a mystery.

"Torch This Place" was recorded in Vancouver with Bruce Fairbairn, whose credits include Aerosmith, AC/DC, Chicago and Van Halen. It may seem like an odd pairing, but Bunkley explained, it was everything but odd.

"He's a trumpet player. He's a jazz aficionado. He really likes old music like Miles and Charlie Parker and all that stuff. He won our hearts because that's what he does. He likes old soul music, rhythm and blues, and jump blues," Bunkley explained.

"That's where his heart really is. He knew about horns and trumpets, and big drum sounds from his experience with rock. Plus, he was so easy to get along with. He's a fun guy and he's got that Canadian hospitality going."

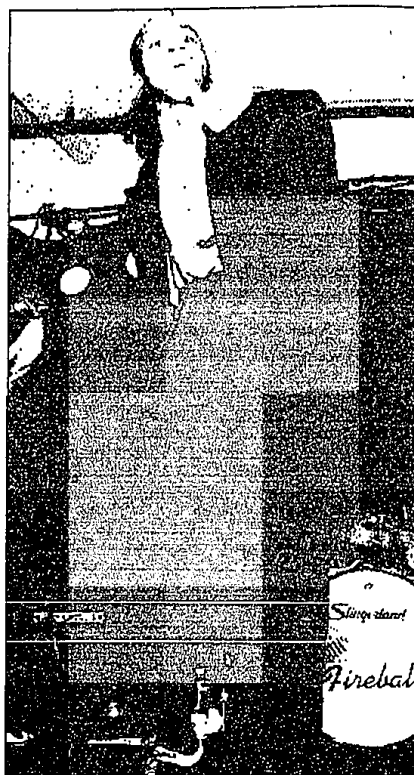
Longtime fan

Blues and soul are Bunkley's first loves. Growing up on Detroit's west side, Bunkley indulged in his mother's album collection, listening to performers like Wynonie Harris and Louis Jordan.

He first found success locally with the ska band Gangster Fun, which he formed during his years at Oakland University in Rochester. When Gangster Fun ran dry, Bunkley took a break from music to pursue a master's degree in sociology and work as a glassblower at Greenfield Village.

In 1996, he and trumpeter James Bostek came up with the idea to start a jump blues/swing band - long before swing bands like the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, Mighty Blue Kings and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy hit the charts.

The Atomic Fireballs inked their multi-album deal with Lava/Atlantic in the summer of 1998 after artist and repertoire rep Rick Goetz heard tracks from the band's debut "Birth of the



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CANNON

High-profile gigs: The Atomic Fireballs, featuring singer John Bunkley, performed at The Magic Stick in the Majestic complex. Staying true to their dedication to longtime friends, The Atomic Fireballs return there Sunday, May 23, for a CD release party and performance.

Swerve.

"It did pretty well in markets like Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis and Des Moines, Iowa. They (A&R folks) sit around and watch what makes a little blip on the screen," Bunkley said.

Goetz then flew out to Chicago to see The Atomic Fireballs perform in front of 250,000 people, and alongside bands like Feist and Marcy Playground. He, along with Flom, was impressed.

"The Fireballs' live show is one of the most exciting and fun live shows I've ever seen," Flom said last summer. "It's highlighted by John Bunkley who, in my opinion, is a superstar in the making."

"He's got style for days and his moves ... he's on a different planet than the rest of us. You can't help smiling."

Cop from page E1

a football scholarship took him to the University of Connecticut (he majored in communications) and a brother and, yes, a family tradition, led to a police career.

But he loves the thrill of acting in a live format, which he compared to playing football on national television or the adrenaline rush a cop might get during a high-speed chase or a high-stakes arrest.

"I love acting like I don't love anything else in the world," he said.

Moug brings an authenticity honed on his regular job to his play, Powers said Toronto said.

■ 'He understands what makes good drama, what makes good theater, what makes good comedy.'

Phil Powers
director

"I think it's been terrific to have him know that world so well," Toronto said.

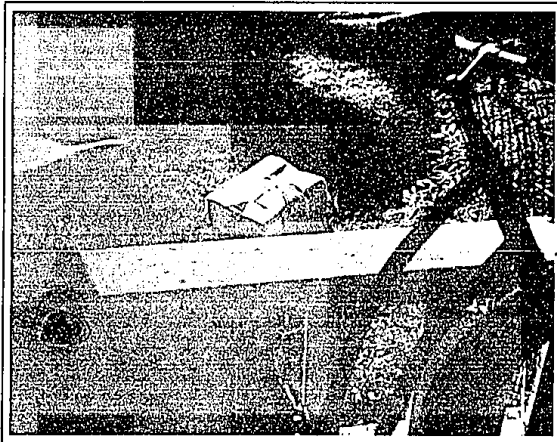
"He understands what makes

good drama, what makes good theater, what makes good comedy," Powers said.

He's also flexible, receptive to ideas and criticism and willing to rewrite and rewrite, both said.

"You hear horror stories about people who write their stuff and want to be in it as well," Toronto said.

"Captain Beefeater" has been optioned by the Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea for the 2000-2001 season. Another script by Moug, "Michigan Autumn," is scheduled to be filmed, in a local production, later this year.



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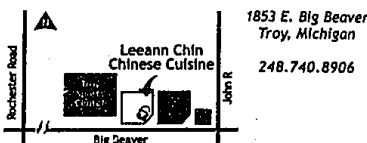
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