

THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



"Just a Second!" Don't miss the Ridgedale Players' presentation of the sequel to "Beau Jest" by James Sherman, 8 p.m. at the theater, 205 W. Long Lake Road, Troy. Tickets are \$11 and include coffee and sandwich afterward, (248) 988-7049.

SATURDAY

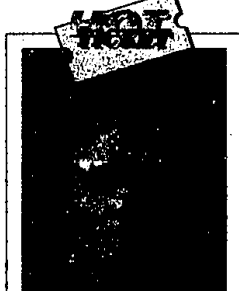


Guest conductor Carl St. Clair leads the Detroit Symphony Orchestra 8:30 p.m. at Orchestra Hall in Detroit. Concert features soloist Camellia Johnson, soprano, and includes two works by American composer Frank Ticheli. Tickets are \$19-\$50. Call (313) 576-5111.

SUNDAY



Musica Viva opens its season 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, at Kingswood Auditorium, Cranbrook, 1221 N. Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, with "Flamenco Fusion," a show featuring Dame Maria del Carmen Spanish Dance Theatre with soloists, guitarists, dancers and singers; the premiere of the "Gypsy Ballads" by Garcia Lorca; and a guest appearance by flutist Ginka Ortega. Tickets are \$25, patron tickets \$50. Includes preferred seating and private afterglow. Call (248) 851-8872, patrons call (248) 626-6245.



Hot This Michigan Opera Theatre presents "Werther," an opera starring Andrea Bocelli, Denyce Graves (pictured), Ying Huang and Christopher Schallanbrand at the Detroit Opera House, 1338 Broadway, Detroit. Performances 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, and Friday, Nov. 12; 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 14. Tickets \$55-\$250. Call (313) 237-SING, or (248) 645-6666.



STAFF PHOTO BY STEVE CANTRELL

Family connections: Photo at left, Rikki Schwartz (left to right), Jan Cable and Michelle Roschek rehearse a scene from the Clarkston Village Players' production, "Close Ties." Below, Tim Dunham (Rev. Jerry Dolan) shares a moment of humor with Nora Bonner (Margarette) in "To Forgive, Divine."

Community THEATER

Clarkston Village Players presents 'Close Ties'

BY SUSAN B. TAUBER
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Clarkston Village Players is bringing to its Depot Theater a play that will elicit a range of feelings — including possible hunger pangs — from the audience.

The play, "Close Ties," takes place in the kitchen of a family matriarch's summer home. Stage manager Joanna Anderson of Waterford is trying to make the kitchen come to life just as the characters do.

"We're trying to set up the kitchen with running water and a stove that works," said director Al Bartlett of Rochester Hills. "Joanne is a cracker jack. We hope to have a cake baking on stage and we'll have the smell of bacon running through the theater."

But the real challenge to directing this drama written by Elizabeth Diggs, he said, is bringing this "very meaningful story to the people" without it's appearing as a soap opera. "If it's done successfully, the audience should be able to laugh, to be touched emotionally, to see themselves and members of their families in the characters on stage," added Bartlett, a life member of Clarkston Village Players.

"Close Ties" is set in the 1980s. It centers around the matriarch of the family, Josephine, played by Jan Cable of Clarkston. Josephine's family and a granddaughter's boyfriend.

Others in the cast are Michelle Roschek and Jeff VoVillia of Clarkston, Rikki Schwartz and Bob Gerics of Waterford, Mary Beth Skinner and Linda Killewald of Auburn Hills. Behind-the-scenes people include producer Don Foster of Waterford and set designer Holly Stephens, also of Waterford.

"This is an extremely good play. It's a powerful drama with a beautiful story," Bartlett added. "It reveals the relationships between the people in the family and their relationship with Josephine, whom they realize is developing senility."

On Stage
What: The Clarkston Village Players presents "Close Ties" by Elizabeth Diggs
When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 5-6, Nov. 12-13 and 19-20; 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 11 and 18.
Where: Depot Theater, 4851 White Lake Road, Clarkston
Tickets: \$12, \$10 on Thursday, Call (248) 625-8811.

Bartlett recommended the play for adults and teenagers.

"If I had to rate this, I'd rate it PG-13 plus," he said. "There is nothing extremely objectionable, although there are a couple of lines with adult references."

"Close Ties" opens to the public on Friday, Nov. 6.

The rest of the Clarkston Village Players 1999-2000 season includes an announced comedy in January, "A Case of Libel" in March, "A Bad Year for Tomatoes" in May, "Mass Appeal" in June and an unscheduled children's show and comedy night.



Trinity House injects humor into religious issues

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
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When Thomas Malcolm Olson first read Jack Neary's "To Forgive, Divine," he knew he had a hit on his hands.

As director of Trinity House Theatre, Olson finds it's not always easy to come up with a play that tackles moral issues in a humorous manner. But the opening show of the 1999-2000 season does just that.

"It's one of those plays, you just laugh out loud," said Olson. "I thought it was one of the best comedies I ever read. It has heart without being sentimental. It's about a priest who's examining his life, all the sacrifices he's made, is it worth it."

Tim Dunham plays Jerry Dolan, the young priest struggling with major life

Please see HUMOR, E2

On Stage

What: Trinity House Theatre presents "To Forgive, Divine" by Jack Neary.
When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 5-6, 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27; and 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, 14, 21 and 28. For what you can preview performance 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 4.
Where: 38840 W. Six Mile, between Haggerty and I-275, Uvoria.
Tickets: \$10, \$5 on Sunday, Call (734) 464-6302.



In tune: Cellist Shauna Rolston performs traditional and contemporary compositions for cello. She is among the top cellists expanding the repertoire for the instrument.

Flattering face redefines classical music boundaries

BY FRANK PROVENZANO
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The resemblance between cellist Shauna Rolston and pop-country singer diva Shania Twain might be more than superficial.

Besides sharing obvious physical similarities and a defiantly glamorous attitude, Rolston is very much like Twain in redefining the boundaries of her musical genre.

Rolston will perform in a concert recital Tuesday at the Cranbrook House. Her program includes sonatas by Debussy, Barber and Chopin.

But don't expect Rolston, 32, to accompany her bow and cello by wearing a pleasantly indistinguishable monocled gown. Or a neatly pressed and urbane expression.

If some think a half-century of country music traditions were tough barriers to break, then consider what Rolston has accomplished in redefining the image of a classical musician, with her hair-blowing-in-the-breeze super-model looks and easy-to-laugh nature.

"I'm not trying to project an image," she said. "I just want to feel as natural and free and inviting to the audience."

While Rolston often performs classical pieces considered within the standard repertoire for the cello, her relentless approach and zeal are anything but stodgy traditionalism.

"I imagine that I'm having a conversation with the composer, that they're right there with me and I can ask them questions," said Rolston.

That might be too far of a stretch. Rolston is in high demand as both a performer and an artist coveted by contemporary composers.

"It's exploring sound and gesture," said Rolston. "I learn a lot working with current composers. I've learned that responding to music requires different types of reflexes, gestures and a sense of drama."

Please see BOUNDARIES, E2

POPULAR MUSIC

Ready, set, go: Park set to tour, release album, star in film

BY STEPHANIE ANGELIN CASOLA
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A name like "Park: A Rock Band" doesn't leave much to the imagination, but the Detroit-based band is anything but a predictable bunch.

Don't confuse Park with the Detroit street of the same name, or the lush, green playground that comes to mind with any mention of the word. Just give the band a listen.

"I like a lot of fire and passion," said Chuck Bartole, Park's bassist and a former Garden City resident. "We try to groove as hard as possible at all times." Perhaps it's just that explosive energy that brought the band together in the first place.

Park's guitarist Joshua Funk has this real name, believe it or not, has been playing music since he was in grade school. He started on the piano and moved on to the trumpet, cello and guitar — perhaps not the most common path for a rock musician, but it's given him a broad base of knowledge. Funk names The Pixies, The Beatles and Ween as musical influences.

He met keyboardist Chad Krueger in 1996 while

working as part of Second City's improvisational comedy troupe, and they formed the band. Park was named for the building in which they lived, Detroit's Park Avenue Hotel. About a year and a half ago, the band solidified its cast of characters adding Bartole and drummer Doug Walsh into the mix. With a regular Monday night gig at The Town Pump, on the first floor of the building, and by completing two CDs within a three-year period, the band has worked quickly to build its reputation in the Metro area.

PARK: A Rock Band

"Musically we attempt to combine different styles of music together, find new sounds," said Funk, classifying the group's music as a sort of pop-rock fusion. "There's a lot of improvisation, too."

"One of the things we took from Second City was the comedic improvisation and the musical improvisation, and (we're) applying it to music," he said. "I'd say it's a lot easier (improvising) in theater."

Park completed its first national tour in support of "What I Did On My Summer Vacation," their second

Please see PARK, E1



Homecoming: Welcome "Park: A Rock Band" home when they perform Monday, Nov. 8, at the Town Pump in Detroit.