

## THE WEEKEND

### FRIDAY



Virtuoso guitarist Christopher Parkening performs Rodrigo's classic *Concierto de Aranjuez* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra 10:15 a.m. and 8 p.m. at Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward, Ave. Detroit. Tickets \$17 to \$48, call (313) 576-5111.

### SATURDAY



Jill Jack celebrates the release of her second CD *"Too Close to the Sun,"* with a party and performance at the Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Farmdale. Tickets are \$6 for the 18 and older show. Jason Magee and Sun 209 open the show at 9 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., respectively, with Jack to follow at 10:15 p.m. For more information, call (248) 544-3030 or visit <http://www.jilljack.com>. See story inside.

### SUNDAY

You can always find something unusual at the Sugarloaf Art Fair. Catherine Hiller whose soft sculpture "High Jinx" is pictured here, is among the 300 professional artisans displaying and selling their work, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Novi Expo Center, Novi Road at I-696. Admission \$6, under 12 and parking free, call (800) 210-9900.



Harry Connick Sr. joins the Nelson Riddle Orchestra led by director Christopher Riddle, 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23 in a "Salute to the Music of Frank Sinatra" at Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$36.50, \$31.50 and \$26.50, call (248) 645-6666 or (313) 963-2366.

# JEFF DANIELS

## keeps Hollywood and Chelsea in perspective

By HUGH GALLAGHER  
STAFF WRITER  
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Jeff Daniels is the movie star who didn't go Hollywood.

He went to Chelsea instead, or, as he says, he never left. "In a sense I never left, so it wasn't a coming back," he said. "I was in New York for nine years and some in L.A. But there are a lot of things I want to do and not just films. It's not about going to parties in Hollywood Hills or on Mulholland Drive. I have kids I want to see grow up in the Midwest. It worked for me."

Daniels, 43, grew up in Chelsea where his father ran the Chelsea Lumber Co. He was a graduate of Central Michigan University, married his high school sweetheart,

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Kathleen, and moved to New York.

But despite success on stage and in film, Daniels has always maintained his ties to his small town home.

Now he's busy with two projects that take different views of small town life—promoting his new movie "Pleasantville," opening nationwide Friday and directing his own play "Boom Town," now being performed at the Purple Rose Theatre.

In "Pleasantville" (see review, Page E6) Daniels plays Mr. Johnson, a sweetly befuddled soda jerk who longs to be an artist.

Unfortunately, he lives in a black and white 1950s sit-com town.

"Pleasantville," written and directed by Gary Ross, lampoons the dull unreality of those '50s comedies while extolling the need for conflict, unpredictability, passion and art in our lives. Daniels is proud of his new film.

"It seemed to be a very eloquent response to efforts by many to throw a blanket on what we as artists do. The message is there, especially in my character, Mr. Johnson, that you have to paint from your heart and soul," Daniels said, in a quick phone interview on a busy day of promoting the



NEW LINE CINEMA



Dramatic comedy: Joan Allen (left) and Jeff Daniels in a scene from "Pleasantville." (Above) J.T. Walsh (left) stars in "Pleasantville." (Below) Tobey Maguire (left) and Marley Shelton in a scene from "Pleasantville."

film and putting final touches on the play.

"And the other characters learn that revelation that you have to be true to yourself. I loved the script that Gary Ross created, and I said I want to do that."

Daniels has always taken his art seriously. He first won recognition for his stage performance as Jed in Lanford Wilson's "Fifth of July." He won a Drama Desk Award for that part and followed that with an Obie-winning performance in "Johnny Got His Gun." He won a second Drama Desk Award for another Lanford Wilson play, "Lemon Sky."

In film Daniels has played a range of roles beginning with the irresponsible Flap in "Terms of Endearment." He's won rave reviews for his portrayal of Civil War colonel Joshua Chamberlain in "Gettysburg" and as an unconventional father in "Fly Away Home" and has appeared in such blockbuster hits as "Speed," "101 Dalmatians" and "Dumb and Dumber."

"Daniels doesn't set criteria for the parts he plays.

"You go year by year. You come to a point in your career when you do a 'Speed' or 'Dumb and Dumb-

er" and it happens to be very popular so you can go off and do other things," Daniels said.

The "other thing" he has devoted most of his time to in recent years has been the Purple Rose Theatre Company in Chelsea, named after Woody Allen's "The Purple Rose of Cairo," in which Daniels played a movie character who steps out of the silver screen and into the life of Mia Farrow (a magic similar to that in "Pleasantville.") Daniels said Allen told him he did "good," a compliment he treasures.

"Boom Town" is a serious play about a small town that Daniels told an interviewer "is Chelsea." Daniels deals with the development issues that are troubling many small towns on the fringe of urban areas.

"This is the seventh play I've written, and I'm directing this one. We've had previews and the audience response was wonderful," Daniels said.

The director praised his three actor cast — Guy Sanville, Sandra Birch and John Lepard. He said the Purple Rose allows theater people, "who

**WHAT:** Jeff Daniels' play "Boom Town"

**WHERE:** Purple Rose's Garage Theatre, 137 Park St., Chelsea

**WHEN:** 8 p.m. Wednesdays-Fridays, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays through Nov. 29.

**TICKETS:** \$20, Wednesday-Thursday, Sunday, \$25 Friday-Saturday, Call (734) 475-5817.

Please see DANIELS, E2

## BENEFIT

# Gala evening recreates theater in 1928

By LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
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George McCann remembers when matinees at the Ramona theater were five cents. For the last month, McCann, a Southfield resident, has been recreating the front of the Redford Theatre in Detroit on the stage of the historic building opened in 1928. The set, which will serve as a backdrop for a gala evening to celebrate the theater's 70th anniversary Oct. 24, brings back memories of the days of silent movies accompanied by live organ music and sound effects.

"We'd go to Hudson's and then to the theater downtown," said McCann, eyeing his handiwork. "The restoration work and painting the set is a lot of work but well worth it."

A former manager of the Michigan Theater downtown, McCann is one of the members of the Motor City Organ

### Historic Redford Theatre Gala

**WHAT:** The theater celebrates its 70th anniversary with the silent movie "Our Hospitality" starring Buster Keaton, and performances by the Motor City Organ Society Orchestra, and Tony O'Brien and John Lutzler on the Barton Theatre Organ.

**WHEN:** 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24.

**WHERE:** 17360 Lahser Road at Grand River, Detroit

**TICKETS:** \$10 for adults, \$6 children, and available by calling (313) 537-2560.

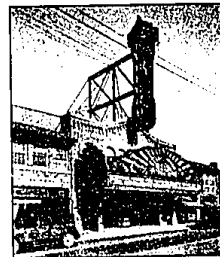
Theatre Society who became concerned with saving the Redford Theatre's Barton pipe organ in the mid-1970s. When the nonprofit organization bought the Redford Theatre in 1977, the decorative stenciling, murals and architecture had nearly been destroyed by the theater management during World War II. Drapes, paint, paneling and masonry covered the beautiful Oriental designs. Built by John F. Kunsak, the theater

was billed as "America's most unique suburban playhouse" when it opened Jan. 27, 1928.

"Their slogan was it's like sitting in a Japanese garden," said Society member Brian Carmody who they covered up everything during World War II.

Slowly the glitzy gold organ with its serpentine dragon decorations rose from the orchestra pit. Carmody climbed on board and began fiddling with the chimes, gong, steam boat whistle, and siren. The Redford resident became hooked on saving the organ and theater when he played the Barton in 1975. A staff organist for the Fox Theatre, Carmody majored in music education at the University of Detroit and taught at St. Martin de Porres in Detroit. He began playing organ 27 years ago after he saw Virgil Fox perform. Carmody refers to Fox as the "Liberace of classical organ."

Please see THEATER, E2



Memorials: This vintage photo of the Redford Theatre was taken in 1928 when it opened.