

Weekly Wisconsin, Editor: 734-933-2105, Fax: 734-933-2106, e-mail: http://www.933-2105.com, Thursday, October 29, 1998

## THE WEEKEND

### FRIDAY



The Rising Stars will present "Treasure Island" 7:30 p.m. at Andover High School, 4200 Andover Road (south of Long Lake Road), Bloomfield Hills. Tickets \$3, available at the door, or call (248) 433-0885.

### SATURDAY



Gail Sahney and Joshua Dawson are featured in St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook's season opener, "Social Security," 8 p.m. at the theater, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. Tickets \$12 adults, \$10 seniors 62 and older, and students, 18 and younger, call (248) 644-0527.

### SUNDAY



First Theatre Guild presents "The Sound of Music," 2 p.m. at Knox Auditorium, First Presbyterian Church, 1669 W. Maple Road, Birmingham. Tickets \$8 adults, \$54 seniors and students, call (248) 644-2040, Ext. 151.



The best way to get "Goosebumps," based on the popular books written by R. L. Stine, is to see it live on stage through Sunday, Nov. 1 at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$12.50-\$35, call (248) 433-1515.

## Reinterpreting forbidden love theme *Lucia di Lammermoor*

BY FRANK PROVENZANO  
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The proverbial operatic fat lady has been replaced. Vibrato-shaking no longer has a gravity-defying jiggle.

Indeed, the leading "fat lady" in the Michigan Opera Theatre's upcoming production, "Lucia di Lammermoor," has the svelte sexuality of a pop diva more in the tradition of Mariah Carey or Celine Dion.

While the talent - oh, my - has the same awesome girth, there's a decided angelic resonance traveling the up and down road to octaves seldom heard.

The title role of Lucia in one of Donizetti's finest operas opening this Saturday at the Detroit Opera House will be shared between two of the opera world's most promising and winsome coloratura sopranos, Sumi Jo and Youngok Shin.

Not only do Sumi and Youngok alternate performances in what is acknowledged as the most demanding acting and singing role for sopranos in the classic opera repertoire, they're both from South Korea, and even went to the same performing arts high school.

They're only separated by a few years, slight differences in style, and the Atlantic Ocean. Sumi makes her home in Rome, while Youngok, a graduate of the Julliard School of Performing Arts, lives in New York.

The Korean press has billed the shared performance at the Detroit Opera House as the equivalent of Pavarotti meets Placido Domingo.

A broader perspective of the opera, however, indicates that the better metaphor might be that "Lucia di Lammermoor" is like a United Nations delegation set to music.

"My baritone is Russian who lives in Austria and speaks German," said Mario Carradi, the Italian-born director, speaking in his second language, English.

While the opera is set in Scotland and sung in Italian, Carradi and baritone Evgenij Dmitriev communicate in German.

In addition to Sumi and Youngok, whose native language is Korean, the cast includes Mexico-born tenor Fernando de la Mora, Italian tenor Giorgio Cuscari, and American bass Brian Matthews.

"Opera is the most cosmopolitan of all art forms," said Carradi, who was last at the Opera House in 1996 to direct "Carmen."



STAFF PHOTO BY JOE JACOBFIELD

Lucia double: Sopranos Youngok Shin, (left), and Sumi Jo alternate performances in the lead role of "Lucia di Lammermoor," called one of the most demanding in the opera repertoire. Steve Benson.

"An opera is not a mystery movie," he said. "We know the story beforehand. What's interesting is how the story reveals itself."

### A night to remember

The story of "Lucia di Lammermoor" is similar to "Romeo and Juliet." There are, of course, a few plot twists and melodramatic dirges that offer an operatic indulgence to the theme of forbidden love.

Set in the late 1800s Scotland, the opera revolves around Lucia's love for a man who is the sworn mortal enemy of her brother. In fact, she is secretly betrothed to the proclaimed enemy of her sibling.

When her brother discovers the ultimate act of

disloyalty, he forges a letter supposedly written by the subject of his sister's affection to instigate the break up. In due time, Lucia is forced to marry a wealthy aristocrat and forgo the love of her life.

As far as wedding nights go, this one is unforgettable for another reason altogether. Filled with anguish and rage, Lucia goes mad and murders her new husband. (So much for seeking counseling.)

The "mad scene" is the operatic equivalent of the soliloquy in Shakespeare's "Hamlet."

Because of their physical slightness - both Sumi and Youngok stand close to five feet - the interpretation of "Lucia di Lammermoor" takes a more fragile and delicate histrionics.

"Lucia has so many layers and interpretations," said Carradi. "With the two beautiful women (portraying Lucia) it was clear that it should be played with a frailness, a defenselessness."

But don't mistake a portrayal of a defenseless character with weakness or compromise to contemporary commercial pressures. Nor is the MOT's "Lucia di Lammermoor" a case of svelte sopranos replacing a larger-than-life emotion.

The fat lady may be dead. But hey, this is opera.

Long live the fat lady.

What: "Lucia di Lammermoor," presented by the Michigan Opera Theatre  
When: 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31; 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 1; 8 p.m. Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Nov. 4, 6 & 7; 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8.  
Tickets: \$18-\$95; (313) 874-5195, or (248) 645-6666.

Interpreter: Mario Carradi directs a "more fragile Lucia" in the upcoming performance of Donizetti's famous opera.

STAFF PHOTO BY JOE JACOBFIELD

## Purple Rose gives Midwest first-class voice

BY HUGH GALLAGHER  
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It isn't Broadway. No sea of neon lights, no triple-parked yellow taxis, no glitz and glitter.

But the Garage Theatre of the Purple Rose Theatre Company is a place where serious theater takes place.

"Everything's not necessarily better in New York, in fact isn't as good," said Alan Ribant, managing director of the Purple Rose.

"The Midwest doesn't have to be treated as a second-class citizen."

In 1986, movie actor Jeff Daniels and his wife, Kathleen, decided to move back to Chelsea and raise their children in the small town, Midwest environment where they were reared.

"Jeff wanted to do more than write a check to an arts group," Ribant said. "He wanted repay the place where he got his start and help artists here in the Midwest."

Seven years and 34 productions later Daniels is happy to declare his theater an artistic success.

"It's the culmination of many years of hard work by talented directors, writers, actors and designers," he said in a recent interview.

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.



Tense moment: Sandra Birch, Guy Sanville and John Lepard (left to right) perform in Jeff Daniels' taut drama of adultery in a small but growing town.

The theater was named for the Woody Allen movie "The Purple Rose of Cairo," in which Daniels starred as a movie character who escapes from the silver screen. In the real world Daniels is able to escape from Hollywood and operate a theater dedicated to producing new plays by regional playwrights and employing local talent in front of and behind the footlights.

"We're not doing theater to do the 60th production of Neil Simon's 'Odd Couple,'" said Ribant.

The current Purple Rose production is Daniels' "Boom Town," a tense three-

Please see PURPLE ROSE, E2

## POPULAR MUSIC

## Rapper Sen Dog burning for solo project

BY CHRISTINA FUCO  
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Things are a bit hectic for Cypress Hill rapper Sen Dog. The couple weeks that he has off of touring is supposed to be spent with his funk/rap band SX-10.

But with "Led Zepplin IV" blaring and a child crying in the background of his Huntington Beach, Calif., home, he doesn't feel very optimistic.

"I really need to get going before the real major touring starts," he said with a sigh. "All the material is ready to go out. I just need to start the project and move forward with it," said the Havana-born Sen Dog, known to his mother as Sennen Reyes.

The SX-10 project hit a snag last week when the producer who had attached himself to the recording project pulled out.

"He had us hanging there for a couple months.

But we put two and two together. Now we're looking for someone else."

All that may be up in the air, but Sen Dog has something else on which to focus - "TV," the appropriately named fourth album from Cypress Hill. The album marks Sen Dog's return to the band, best known for its hit "Insane in the Brain."

Who: Cypress Hill and Incubus  
When: Tuesday, Nov. 3. Doors open at 8 p.m.  
Where: St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress Hall, Detroit.  
How: Tickets are \$27.50 and available at all Ticketmaster outlets for the all-ages show. For more information, call (313) 961-MELT or visit http://www.961melt.com or http://www.ticketmaster.com.

He left the band in 1995 to pursue other musical interests.

"I joined Cypress Hill with the intention that I was going to do other projects," Sen Dog said bluntly.

SX-10 released a sampler on Flip Records earlier this year but returned to his hemp-supporting cohorts because of pure music business politics. Sen Dog gives the impression that he's biding his time with Cypress Hill until his solo project kicks off.

"There was a lot of politics involved. How can I say this. Of course I missed being part of the Hill and doing things with them. But it was obviously clear to me that I would not be able to put out any other music until I went back to Cypress Hill. Then possibly the gods from above and the label stuff

Please see SEN DOG, E2



Promoting new album: Cypress Hill plays a special club show Tuesday, Nov. 3, at St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit in support of its new album "TV."