# Life at 'Fame' school a natural for stage musical

BY NICOLE STAFFORD STATY WRITER natafford@oe.home

The characters in Fame - The Musical won't beam with as much 'I'm gonna live forever' attitude as their counterparts in the award-winning movie ver-

the award-winning movie ver-sion.
The characters in the stage musical, which runs through March 18 at the Detroit Opera flexes, have a leg up on the per-forming arts students depicted in the film. It's 1984 and the musical's incoming class have

seen the movie.

seen the movie.

Naturally, the teachers at the "Fame" school have also seen the movie. First lesson: banish any silly Hollywood movie ideas about a glamorous, free-epirite life at the "Fame" school, which is lossely based on the real Florella H. La Guardia High School of Music and Art and Performing Arts in New York City. The high school was founded in 1938 and is the first government-funded arts school.

Teaching the first lesson is

Teaching the first lesson is home room teacher Miss Sher-

What: Fame – The Musical
When: 7:30 p.m. Thursdey-Fridey, Merch 15-16, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Saturday, Merch 17; 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday, Merch 18
Where: Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broedway, Detroit
Tickats: \$10-50, call Ticketmaster, (248) 645-6666, the Detroit
Opera House box office, (313) 237-7464 or The Palace box office, (248) 377-0100

man, who greets the incoming class at the start of the musical by saying, "If you believe you're gonna live forever or eavision dancing on tops of cars down each Street, you are humming the wrong tune."

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"Fame is retro now," comment-ed the musical's creator David De Silva, who also created and produced the 1980 movie Fame, which garnered two Academy Awards and five Oscar nomina-tions.

Awards and two Uscar nomina-tions.

Though in the play, only four years have passed since the release of the movie, De Silva's stage show must play to a wiser, new millennium audience. To give the musical a more contem-porary tone, his characters and the story line strike "more of a balance" between unbridled ide-alism and information age savyy.

"Before, there was less aware-ness of AIDS, there were no metal detectors in schools," said

De Silva.

The stage version differs from the movie as a matter of form, too. With characters who love to sing, dance and play instruments, a musical version of Fame sooms in on those activities even more, said De Silva. 'I think audiences are going to like the theater experience more. Fame, organically is a musical. These kids are there to sing and dance."

Divided into two acts, the

dance.

Divided into two acts, the musical showcases 31 performers, 15 songs and six dance numbers. Lyrics were written by Jacques Levy, and music by Stave Margaches. Lars Betheke directed and choreographed the production.

De Silva developed the show in Miami in 1988. A theater in Philadelphia later staged the musical before it was published in 1990 by Music Theatre International. Since then, the China

Learning to fly: James T. Lane in a scene from "Fame" now playing at the Michigan Opera House.

Theatre in Stockholm performed a Swedish version of Fame – The Musical and soveral other European theater groups have presented it on stage. De Sliva has even seen his musical done in Hungarian and Polish tongues.



### THE RIDE DOWN MT. MORGAN A Delicious Comedy of Bad Manners .



BY ARTHUR MILLER

MAR 21 THROUGH APR 15

When fifty-something super-silenme and indigensity time. In a super-silenme and beginnist tymes feet plunges his Porche down snowy Mit. Morgan, his while world comes crashing while world comes crashing beddied. Between fewered dreams, he parades his boundless appette to have his cake and eat yours, too Arthur Miller's a fusant Broadway his 1s\* \_\_wished; broadway his 1s\* When fifty-something

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## Air Force from page B1

forming jobs are very competi-

Unlike many musicians who go from job to job, Olds has a steady gig with the Air Force. He remombers hearing a military band perform as a child, and it kind of put a seed in back of his band.

head.

The musicians perform collectively in the concert band, and in smaller ensembles which showcase their talent. All are professionally trained, and must audition for the chance to play in the

group. Night Flight Jazz Ensemble is

one of 13 active duty Air Force jagz bands in existence today.

"We have a couple of vocalists and try to present a wide repertoire," said Olds. The group, which has performed at the Detroit-Montreux Jazz Festival, and plays music from the Big Band era, jazz, Latin, and original music written by band members.

Wright Brass combines "a brassy blend of sound, style and humor" in the tradition of the popular Canadian Brass.

"We have successfully intro-

duced humor, but we play some serious tunes too, said Olds.

The Centemporary Clarinet Quartet, one of the newest ensembles, plays a variety of material including classics and the music of Benny Goodman and Woody Herman.

Huffman Prairio Winds, a woodwind quintet, performs classic reportoire, show tunes and regtime.

The musicians tour on average about one week per month. They tour Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Penn-

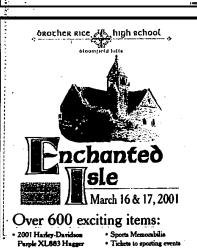
sylvania and Maryland.

"There are a lot of careers in the Air Force," said Olds. "We're looking forward to playing for folks. We have a great reputa-tion and folks seem to enjoy it."

#### Noteworthy

The Farmington Community Band's 35th Spring Concert is 3 p.m. Sunday, March 25 at Farm-ington High School on Shi-awassee, just west of Orchard Lake Road.

No admission charge. For more information, call (734) 261-



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