

Arts & Entertainment

GALLERIES ■ THEATER ■ DANCE ■ DINING

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B1 (F)

Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, March 20, 2003

Hot tickets

■ Motown

Oakland Community College presents The Optimistics and The Fabulous Motown Entertainers at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 28, at Smith Theatre on the OCC Orchard Ridge campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. Tickets \$15, call (248) 522-3667.

■ CD releases

Join the Twistin' Tarantulas at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 22, to celebrate the release of their third CD, *El Destrojo*, at the Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Admission \$7, call (248) 544-



3030 or visit www.themagicbag.com or www.wislinfantarantulas.com for details.

■ Book signing

Stop by Paint Creek Center for the Arts, 401 Pine St., Rochester, at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 29, for an open house reception honoring Ballet Master Jacob Lescu. He'll be signing copies of his new book, *Two Lives in Two Worlds*, which highlights his life in Romania, and as a ballet master. For more information, call (248) 651-4110 or visit www.pccart.org.

■ Guitarist

Brook Williams will be at Trinitiy House, 38840 W. Six Mile Road, Livonia, at 8 p.m. Friday, March 21, to celebrate the release of his new CD *Nectar*. Recorded in Nashville, the CD features some of the city's finest roots musicians. Williams' buttery voice and rockin' guitar playing. Lisa Papas opens the show. Tickets \$10, call (734) 464-6302.

■ Just for kids

Margis Theatre, 135 E. Main St., Northville, presents The Emperor's New Clothes at 2:30 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, March 22-23. Tickets \$7.50, call (248) 349-8100.

■ Fairy tales

Can an orchestra really sound like Cinderella's clock striking midnight; depict a beautiful firebird saving a young man from evil monsters; or evoke scurrying rats following a piper through the streets of Hamelin? When they're playing music written by world-famous composers, it can. Audiences will hear works inspired by fairy tale favorites written by Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Stravinsky and more at 4 p.m. Sunday, March 23, at the Michigan Theatre in downtown Ann Arbor. The hour-long concert by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra is preceded by an "Instrument Petting Zoo." Recommended for children ages 5-8, and all ticketholders are welcome. Admission is \$10 adults, \$5 children. Call (734) 994-4801 or online at www.a2so.com.



Swing is among the numerous ballroom and Latin dance styles performed in 'Burn the Floor'.

Burning ever brightly

Ballroom dancing entertains on stage and inside local studios

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

A vocal track suggestively asks "Do you want to dance with me?" bouncing off the polished wood floor inside Dance Elite Ballroom Studio in West Bloomfield.

It's standing-room only. For there are at least 75 onlookers, amateur ballroom dancers from all over metropolitan Detroit, gathered around the chandeliered dance floor. They expect to see, rather than hear, the answer to the question — and they're right.

The reply is a hip-grating, quick-stepping, heart-pounding, applause-inspiring salsa from four *Burn the Floor* cast members.

A handful of the 32 internationally acclaimed dancers have stopped by to judge a competition of local dancers and preview their upcoming Detroit performances, Friday-Sunday, March 28-30, at the Fox Theatre.

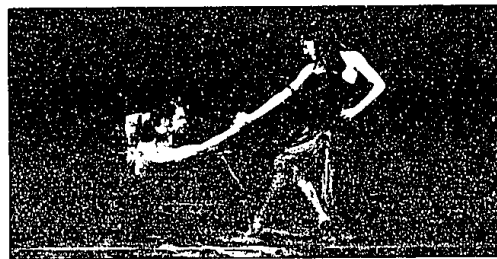
The exhibition turnout goes to show ballroom dancing is still burning, not a fad on the way out.

The preview goes to show *Burn the Floor* is no ordinary two-hour showcase of ballroom and Latin dance. Yes, it's rumba, samba, cha cha cha, waltz, jive, jitterbug, swing, mambo, salsa, tango and quickstep.

But it's theatrical, extravagant and sultry in a way grandmother could not have imagined.

"It's ballroom spiced with a more modern flavor," says Rebecca Sugden, a cast member judging the dance competition and Australian native. "It has more edge."

Enhancing the 32 dancers' hot moves are stylish costumes from the likes of Gucci and Versace and lighting and sound on par with big-time rock 'n' roll concerts.



'Burn the Floor,' opening March 28 with five performances at the Fox Theatre, takes ballroom and Latin dancing to sultry, sensational heights.

So enrapturing is the show, audience members have been known to jump on the stage, Sugden says, adding, "We do try to get people on their feet by the end of the night. Ballroom dancing is great fun and anybody can do it. It's like a secret society, but we're bringing it out into the public."

FEELING FREE

Susana Cieslinski of Clinton Township, who along with partner Rich Jaramillo of Farmington Hills won the night's local competition, is already convinced ballroom is for her. She says she's addicted and loves *Burn the Floor*.

"I've seen *Burn the Floor* twice. I even have the videotape," she says. "Watching it inspires me. I want to get the feeling they get."

Cieslinski learned Latin dance several

PLEASE SEE DANCE, B2

MOVIES

What: *Burn the Floor*, a theatrical ballroom and Latin dance presentation featuring championship dance couples.

When: 8 p.m. Friday, March 28; 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, March 29; 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday, March 30.

Where: Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

Tickets: \$15-60, at Fox Theatre and Joe Louis Arena box offices or any Ticketmaster outlet. Ticketmaster can be reached at (248) 433-1515 or visit www.ticketmaster.com. For group tickets, call (313) 471-3099. For event information, call Olympia Entertainment at (313) 983-6606 or visit www.olympiaentertainment.com.

KC still full of sunshine

'Shake Your Booty' with disco king

BY EILEEN MCCARTHY
STAFF WRITER

Harry Wayne Casey — known to fans as simply KC — is still shaking his booty.

"Yes, I'm still shaking it. It's a little bigger now," laughed Casey, who formed KC and the Sunshine Band in the '70s. "I was 150 pounds back then."

"It's a 190-pound booty now but it's in proportion," said Casey, 52, from his home in Miami, which he shares with golden retrievers Boston and Candy.

These days "get down" may be more of a command for each pooch to stay put than '70s disco jargon and a line from one of his classic hits, *Get Down Tonight*. The infectious party song is one of four number one singles the Sunshine Band had in the span of one year — the only group to have done so other than The Beatles. Others include, of course, *Shake Your Booty*, *That's the Way (I Like It)* and *Boogie Shoes*.

Though he retired in 1985 — following recuperation from a head-on collision and his father's death — Casey decided to return to the music scene a few years ago after a gig on the former Arsenio Hall show gave him the motivation to do so.

"I just started doing it again. I just put my mind back into the mode," he said.

KC and the Sunshine Band are set to shake at Dearborn's

PLEASE SEE KC, B3



Harry Wayne Casey is known to fans as KC.

Cranbrook science museum shows off treasured collections

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Boys and girls swarm a glass case at Cranbrook Institute of Science for an up close look at a snake submerged in a jar of alcohol. The Southfield Christian Academy students seem spellbound as they listen patiently to Mike Stafford then flood him with questions. This was the reaction the Bloomfield Hills museum director was hoping for.

Before long he'd lead them like a piper through the

PLEASE SEE CRANBROOK, B2



Mike Stafford tells the story of King Tut's throne at the front of the Treasures exhibit. Cranbrook founders George and Ellen Booth (pictured on camel back) were in Egypt when the tomb was discovered in 1922 and tried unsuccessfully to purchase it. Later, they commissioned the reproduction shown here.

FINDS

What: Treasures of the Institute Collection

When: Through May 4, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, until 10 p.m. Friday

Where: Science Institute at Cranbrook, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills

Tickets: Free with museum admission \$7.55 ages 2-12 and seniors. No charge for children under 2. (877) 462-7262 or www.cranbrook.edu

Related event: Archaeology Day 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 29

Ballet Shoes or Wing Tips?



Makes no difference as long as you take time to put your feet up, get comfortable and spend some time with us.