

MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 1993

STREET CRACKS

Second City warms up for Detroit debut

BY BOB SADLER
SPECIAL WRITER

While on vacation in Chicago two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to catch the late Saturday evening show at The Second City's main stage. The company there was performing an entertaining little revue called "Take Me Out to the Balkans," an indication of the edgy brand of reality-based humor being presented. Audience response was enthusiastic throughout, and justifiably so, because the company was at the top of its craft that night.

As the revue ended, the company prepared for the traditional improvisational portion of the show which follows the revue on selected nights. Since it was already 1 a.m., some of the less hardy souls in the audience made for the exits. Their seats were quickly scooped up by Second City fans who — believe it or not — will wait that late every week outside the theater rain or shine and pay a few bucks just to come in and watch the improv.

They were not to be disappointed on this night. Before the lights went up on the stage again, an announcement came up that there were a few special guests in the house who would be joining the action. Among the alumni who showed up were Chris Farley and Tim Meadows, two guys with nothing better to do since "Saturday Night Live" is still on summer hiatus.

A genuine anticipation filled the room as the old pros mixed with the current cast and the energy generated carried the performers and audience alike through more than an additional hour of laughs.

This is just a sample of the kind of excitement that comes to Detroit on Sept. 15 as The Second City opens its newest stage in the revitalized Theater District. While it can't be guaranteed that big stars who got their starts at The Second City will show up every night in Detroit, you'd better believe the homegrown cast of seven will give everyone their money's worth.

The troupe includes Robin Bucci of Sterling Heights, Colin Ferguson of Birmingham, Jerry C. Minor of Fenton, Andrew Newberg of Ann Arbor, Tim Pryor of Farmington Hills, Jackie Puritan (yes, she is the daughter of a certain morning radio personality) of Bloomfield Hills and Angela Shelton of Detroit. This group was chosen out of the more than 750 performers who auditioned at The Fox in April.

"It's the most diverse cast in the history of 'The Second City,'" said Pryor, a Detroit Country Day graduate who still works as an advertising copywriter in addition to performing.

The troupe spent its summer training and rehearsing for the big premiere. They got some

See SECOND CITY, 6B



At the test: Liz Phair (left) and Walt Mink — Joey Waronker (above, from left), Jim Kimbrough and Candice Belanoff — perform at the X-Fest at the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre in Pontiac on Sunday, Sept. 5.

Liz Phair: Fresh face for X-fest



BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER

In the last few months, fresh-faced singer/songwriter Liz Phair has appeared in most major music magazines. Despite anticipating some press, the unsure Phair sees it all as a "gag."

"It's like one of those birthday gags where it says 'insert your name here.' That's what all my friends say. We all laugh about it," said Phair via telephone from her Chicago home.

Even though she is highly regarded by her peers and rock critics, the 26-year-old has many apologies for her show.

"I'd like to apologize in advance; I'm not the best performer. I've only performed live once. Please be

forgiving of my bad technique," said Phair who is performing at the X-Fest at the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre in Pontiac on Sunday, Sept. 5.

Does her lack of experience make her nervous?
"Oh yeah. I'm totally scared. No... apprehensive," Phair said in a sing-songy voice. "I'm gonna be

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excited, restless and antsy coupled with anxiety... and apprehensive."

Phair has a lot to be apprehensive about. Aside from only playing once, Phair's songs on her debut album, "Exile in Guyville" (Matador records), are deeply personal, vivid

accounts of bad relationships with men. Sharing her songs with audiences has made her feel uncomfortable.

"Everything new has really caused me some grief in terms of my music. I wrote the songs in my room, in private. It felt kind of intrusive for awhile."

On "Exile in Guyville" Phair also shows a lighter side by modeling her album after the Rolling Stones record "Exile on Main Street." Like the Stones, there are 18 songs on the album. For her next album, which she is in the middle of recording, Phair is looking for another model. "It's a tried and true sequence," she said.

Aside from the freshman performer Phair, there will veteran acts be featured at radio station 89X's X-Fest. Former Big Star member and Replacements song subject Alex Chilton continues his comeback with his performance.

Walt Mink, 13 Engines, Urge Overkill and the Breeders, featuring

ex-Pixie Kim Deal, will also play on the mainstage.

The sidestage will be home to a diverse group of local acts — alternative dance's Charm Farm, the rock and rap of Brotherhood Recipe, awfully alternative rock of Majesty Crush, the surf tunes of the Goldentones, and the hard alternative rock of Brick.

Aside from the music, there will be ethnic food booths and others from Soul in the Hole, a used soul record and T-shirt store, Noir Leather in Royal Oak, Incognito in Royal Oak, hats by Hysteria, Bands of Love in Pontiac, MAPP (Midwestern AIDS Prevention Project) and Alternatives for Girls.

The gates open at 1 p.m. for X-Fest at the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheatre, Water and Saginaw streets, Pontiac. The event will take place rain or shine. Tickets are \$8.90 with 50 cents from each ticket sold going toward Alternatives for Girls. For more information, call 334-1999, 645-6666 or 335-4850.

Bermuda Mohawk has seasoned kind of sound

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Sal D'Agillo has this knack for forming bands with memorable names. Once a member of Anne Be Davis, D'Agillo is now fronting the band Bermuda Mohawk.

"Yeah, I don't know what it is," D'Agillo said with a grin about his bands' names.

In case you've missed the Brady Bunch mania, Anne B. Davis is the woman who played Alice the maid on the television show. For those who don't travel east through Royal Oak down I-696, Bermuda Mohawk is the name of an ill-placed exit. D'Agillo found the name to be perfect.

"They were two words that sounded good together and looked good," the Farmington Hills resident said. "It's an interesting name. A lot of people comment on it."

Formed in September 1992, Bermuda Mohawk is a threesome with an impressive resume. Bassist

Lance Larsen is a former member of the Jazz Nerds and Babylon Hotel. Drummer Jim Latini gigged throughout New York City while growing up there. D'Agillo played lead guitar with his brother, John D. Lamb, and frequently does solo acoustic shows at clubs like the Back Seat Saloon in Keego Harbor.

D'Agillo also did session work for Bob Seger's Silver Bullet Band early in his musical career. "I was 21 at the time," he said. "I couldn't believe it."

Using those experiences, Bermuda Mohawk prides itself on the fact that it hasn't subscribed to any current trend. Fans of Bermuda Mohawk will be able to appreciate that sound when the band releases its first tape in late October.

Bermuda Mohawk will perform, with The Impatiens, Wednesday, Sept. 15, at the Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor (956-8555), and with The Opague, Thursday, Sept. 23, at 3-D, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak (568-3344).



Bermuda Mohawk: Members include bassist Lance Larsen, vocalist/guitarist Sal D'Agillo and drummer Jim Latini.



Good time: Opening night is fast approaching for the seven members of The Second City-Detroit.

AT THE MIKE

■ A Face only His Mother Would Love... Monday, Sept. 6, marks the return of Bobcat Goldthwait to the area, fresh off his motion picture *four de force* as "Shakes the Clown." I guess if you loved the "Police Academy" sagas, you'll enjoy Bobcat at Pine Knob with special guest Kevin Meaney. Tickets are available through TicketMaster or charge at 423-6666.

■ Comedy for Hunger... Jerry Seinfeld is asking 35 bucks for his November shows at the Fox — and he's keeping it. Thank goodness the pride of Beverly Hills (Michigan, that is), Tim Allen is giving his time and the proceeds from an appearance Saturday, Sept. 11, to Forgotten Harvest, where it will help the hungry in the Detroit area. The show at the Fisher Theater also features Mark Ridley, Jim McLean, Keith Huff and Jill Washburn. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased at all TicketMaster outlets or at the Fisher Theater box office. Call Forgotten Harvest at 557-0257 for information about other ticket categories. And remember, "Home Improvement" trashed "Seinfeld" on Wednesday nights last season.

Wednesday, Sept. 1

RAFFI
Pine Knob Music Theatre, I-75 and Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. 377-0100

KONO TAYLOR, LONNIE BROOKS AND JUNIOR WATTS kick off Blues Festival '93 featuring Eric Johnson, T.B. King and Buddy Guy at Chase Park, 2800 E. Atwater, Detroit. 644-3240

BLIND PIG
RICKY, 611 CHURCH, ANN ARBOR. (SNA) 996-2747

PERSONS AT THE RITE, 1014 AND GRATIOT, Royal Oak, as part of a live broadcast on radio station 89X (82.7 FM). (rock) 718-4055

FLIGHT 407 Jazz Series
Q CLUB, 29 S. SAGINAW, PONTIAC. (JAZZ) 334-7411

George Higgins and A.K.B. Band

IN CONCERT

ATTIC BAR, 11847 JOS. CAMPAN, HAMTREC, (blues) 365-4194

Reflections
SHIMMERS AT THE RIVER, 100 ST. CLAIR, DETROIT. (blues) 822-7817

The Strangers
ALVIN'S, 8754 CASS, DETROIT. 832-0550

Some People's Children
WITH CATHOUSE AT BLIND PIG, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 996-8555

Thursday, Sept. 2

ARNE MURRAY

Pine Knob Music Theatre, I-75 and Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. (adult contemporary) 377-0100

BLU/JNO
Bull Cave, Bull Building, 535 Griswold, Detroit. (reggae) 961-8911

NAL
Performs along with Discipline, Twitch, IEC, Marky, Adam Love Pimp, Euthanasia, and bakami 3 at St. Andrew's Hall and the Shelter, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. (industrial/alternative rock) 961-MILT

THE PROVIDERS
With Lesley Modman at Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac.

334-9292

JAMES LAM
With Joshua Kadison at Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward, Detroit. 645-6666

BURST REED BAND
With Harmonica Shah at Attic Bar, 11667 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. (blues) 365-4194

REFLECTIONS
Shimmers at the River, 100 St. Clair, Detroit. (blues) 822-7817

OUTRAGEOUS CHERRY
Allen's, 5756 Cass, Detroit. 832-0559

ACOUSTIC JUNCTION
With Assembly Required at Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 996-8555

See IN CONCERT, 7B