

# Jeff Daniels stars in Civil War epic

BY KEELY WYGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

This is a busy week for actor Jeff Daniels who founded The Purple Rose Theatre Company in Chelsea and serves as its executive director.

Tonight, "The Vast Difference," a comedy he wrote about changing roles of the American Male in the 1990s, opens for preview performances at The Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea. Preview continues through Oct. 14. Opening night is 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15 with shows through Nov. 28. Call 476-7902 for tickets and performance times.

On Sunday Daniels is hosting a screening of "Gettysburg," at the Fox Theatre in Detroit to benefit The Purple Rose Theatre, a not-for-profit theater that showcases the works of playwrights from the Midwest.

Based on Michael Shaara's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "The Killer Angels," "Gettysburg," a New Line Cinema

## PREVIEW

Turner Pictures release, dramatically depicts the three-day battle of Gettysburg which occurred July 1-3, 1863.

Daniels portrays Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain in the four-hour epic which has gotten rave reviews since it premiered in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 4.

"Gettysburg" opens Friday in metro Detroit at United Artists Theatres Oakland Mall, and will be shown 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 10, at the Fox.

Benefit tickets are \$15 per person, available at the Fox Theatre, 211 Woodward, Detroit, or Ticketmaster, 645-6660. Patron tickets, which include reserved seating and an afterglow at Second City with the stars — Daniels, Martin Sheen, Sam Elliott, C. Thomas Howell and writer/director Ron Maxwell are \$200 a person, call 475-5817.

"I'm doing what I can to bring people downtown. It's an epic event, the Fox is the perfect place to see the film. The film is a big event, and to see it at the Fox is very exciting."

Daniels and I talked on the telephone Friday about "Gettysburg," and his comedy at The Purple Rose Theatre.

"I felt a great sense of responsibility," said Daniels who strongly resembles the Federal Army colonel he portrays in "Gettysburg."

Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain of the 20th Maine Regiment was a 33-year-old college professor, fluent in seven languages.

"Chamberlain listened to his men," said Daniels. "And they fought for him because of that. I think." Chamberlain received the Congressional Medal of Honor, and was designated to receive the surrender of the Confederate Army at Appomattox.

"He's a hero in Maine," said

Daniels. "People were very concerned about how he would be portrayed. I read books about him, and went to Maine to do research. I did my homework."

"Gettysburg" renders a human dimension to the war. More than 5,000 Civil War re-enactors participated in the filming.

The men fought out of loyalty to country or homeland; or to preserve state's rights; others were moved to the defense of individual freedom.

"It was amazing the way they fought," said Daniels. "They stood sometimes 50 feet away from each other and fired. They felt that if their time was coming they would take the bullet standing."

"You can't hear at all, the ground was shaking, it was as if you were there."

Daniels said what made the film so real was the re-enactors who came with their own weapons, weaponry, horses and accou-



Epic drama: Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain (Jeff Daniels, left) confers with Sgt. "Buster" Kilrain (Kevin Conway, right) in the Civil War epic "Gettysburg."

terments. "They really threw themselves into it, you could see it in their eyes."

Daniels said there are moments when you're acting and working on a film when reality and fiction are blurred. "It was spooky for the

re-enactors. It took them back. They swore they saw Chamberlain, they wanted to see Chamberlain. We had a lot of moments where it felt like we were really there, like it was really happening."

# Flavio Varani to perform at Plymouth Symphony concert

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

The Plymouth Symphony Orchestra's 1993-94 concert season promises to be a season to remember with an eclectic array of musical selections, and guests artists that range from soprano, Glenda Kirkland to flutist, Alexander Zorjic.

In celebration of the arts the orchestra, under director/conductor, Russell Reed opens its 48th season with the 19th century roman-

ticism of French, German and Norwegian composers 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9 at Belleville High School Auditorium, 501 W. Columbia.

Internationally recognized pianist, Flavio Varani of Birmingham takes center stage as featured artist in Edward Grieg's "Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16."

Tickets are \$12 (seniors, \$10; K-12, \$5) and available in Plymouth at Evolve Music Center, 215

Ann Arbor Road and Beltnor Jewelry at 904 W. Ann Arbor Trail; in Canton at Dearborn Music Co., 42679 Ford Road; in Northville at Giftfinder, 302 E. Main Street and Bookstall on the Main 101 N. Center, and at the auditorium box office 45 minutes before performances. For more information call the PSO office at 451-2111.

"It's an exciting program, all 19th century music. We have French, Norwegian and German

composers, and their approaches are very different," said Reed now in his seventh full season at the helm of the PSO.

"Berlioz is early romantic, brilliantly orchestrated. Grieg is standard for the late 19th century and a great showpiece for the pianist. Wagner is the epitome of the philosophy of big orchestral work: extra instruments, thickly scored, ultra dramatic."

Artist-in-residence and professor of music at Oakland Universi-

ty in Rochester Hills for 19 years, Varani has performed in France, Germany, Austria, South America, Spain, Italy, Poland, Japan, Israel, and the former Soviet Union.

A child prodigy born in Brazil, Varani first toured with the Brazilian National Symphony at age 10. As his musical talents grew, competition strengthened his abilities. At 13, Varani won the Sao Paulo City Award to study in Paris under Magda Tagliarini and at 18, first prize in the Chopin International Competition in Mallorca, Spain.



Guest soloist: Pianist Flavio Varani of Birmingham will perform at the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra's season opener on Oct. 9.

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