

ON THE MARQUEE



KEELY WYGNONIK

Concerts offer notable introduction to classics

This is a good weekend to introduce your children to the classics. Four area symphonies — Livonia, Plymouth and Detroit are hosting concerts with children in mind. The Farmington Area Philharmonic, also known as Group du Jour, and Rochester Symphony Orchestra, are busy rehearsing for their family-oriented concerts on Feb. 6.

The Livonia Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of assistant conductor Karl Koroub begins its chamber concert series 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 28, and the children's concert series 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 29, at the Livonia Civic Center Library Auditorium, 32777 Five Mile Road, east of Farmington Road. Tickets are \$12 adults, seniors \$2 and older, \$5 students 12 and older, \$6; and children under 12, \$3. Call 421-1111 or 464-2741.

"At the children's concert we introduce the different instruments, and explain how to listen to music," said Koroub. "We show children how to appreciate all kinds of music to broaden their horizons."

Young Artist Competition winners will be featured in concerts to be presented by the Plymouth and Rochester symphonies.

Violinist Christian Hebel, 18 of Plymouth, the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra's second place Youth Artist Competition winner, will perform at two concerts — 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 28 at Novi Civic Center, 45175 10 Mile Road, west of Novi Road, and 8 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29, at First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth, 701 W. Church Street. Tickets are \$6 adults, \$5 seniors, and \$3 students in K-12. Call 451-2112.

The Detroit Symphony will present a live production of the award-winning HBO special and Classic Kid's recording "Beethoven Lives Upstairs" 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 29 at Orchestra Hall in Detroit. The production is a combination of music, history and dramatic storytelling using two actors whose anecdotes and observations are based on true incidents from Beethoven's life. More than 25 examples of Beethoven's music will be featured. Tickets range from \$7 to \$21. Call 833-3700 or Ticketmaster, 645-6666. The next concert in the series "Cinderella" will be on April 30.

The Rochester Symphony Orchestra family concert 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6 at Varner Hall on the campus of Oakland University in Rochester, has something for everyone — from Ferde Grofé's "Grand Canyon Suite" to "Tubby the Tuba."

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LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Entertainment next week:

- Find out what's new at the movies.
- Village Players of Birmingham present "The Music Man."

Classic comedy has timeless appeal

"Our American Cousin" is unforgettable because of its hilarious script, and the fatal shooting that occurred at a performance in 1865.



British and American customs clash with comic results in "Our American Cousin," the 19th century classic that opens Friday, Jan. 28, at Henry Ford Museum Theatre in Dearborn.

A favorite among theatrical audiences for more than a century, this 1858 comedy by Tom Taylor was the first professional play performed at Henry Ford Museum Theatre in 1954. Its last revival by the Greenfield Village Theatre Company was in 1983.

The cast of the current production includes Dan C. Bar of Plymouth and Stephanie Nicole of Troy. Elaine Kaiser of Livonia is assistant producer, and costumer is Bernadine Vida of Redford Township.

In "Our American Cousin," the title "cousin" is Asa Trenchard, an American backwoodsman whose character and colorful speech were inspired by Davy Crockett. As heir to a family fortune, Asa travels to England to meet his very proper but eccentric relatives.

The British Trenchards welcome

ON STAGE

"Our American Cousin"

Theater: Henry Ford Museum Theatre, inside Henry Ford Museum at Oakwood Boulevard and Village Road in Dearborn, west of the Southold Freeway, south of Michigan Ave.

Curtain times: 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Jan. 28 through March 5; 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 13.

Tickets: \$9 for theater only, \$27 for dinner/theater. Call (313) 271-1620 ask for the Reservation Center.



HENRY FORD MUSEUM

their rustic relation with mixed emotions. They are overwhelmed by his manners, clothes and way with words, but eager to win his good will because of the inheritance.

Among the historic fans of Asa Trenchard was President Abraham Lincoln, who was watching the play at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, when he was shot by John Wilkes Booth.

But long before its link with the assassination, "Our American Cousin" was significant for being the first major American play produced by a woman — actress and theater critic Laura Keane. She also starred in the production, touring the United States by wagon and horseback.

The Ford's Theatre production,

which starred Keane, had opened on April 3. Lincoln and his wife had received invitations to attend two different plays that evening, but decided to accept theater owner John Ford's offer to view the actress' closing show.

Stagehands created a special box for the presidential party. The president had not arrived at the theater at curtain time, but the show proceeded. When Lincoln's party arrived at 8:30 p.m., the action on stage paused while the audience

greeted the president and the orchestra played "Hail to the Chief."

The performance was nearly finished when Booth, a well-known actor, slipped into the presidential box and fired the fatal shot. Booth leaped down onto the stage and escaped. Lincoln died some nine hours later. The next offering at Henry Ford Museum Theatre will be "Purdie Victorious," a 1961 comedy by Ossie Davis. Performances are scheduled March 25 to April 30.

Families get into the act for 'Music Man'

Living in harmony is not just an act for two local families who have provided six of the cast members in Village Players of Birmingham's production of "The Music Man," which opens Jan. 28.

Patrick Lynch, who plays Prof. Harold Hill, is joined by his daughter Caitlin, 19, who plays Pick-a-Little Lady, and his son, Patrick Jr., 10, who plays a Boy's Band member.

Celia Keenan-Bolger, 16, is playing Zaneeta, while her sister Maggie, 10, plays Amarilla, and brother, Andrew, 8, plays Winthrop.

A veteran Village Player, Patrick Lynch is combining two of his great roles — family and music for a great personal experience.

"I was so thrilled when Village Players decided to do this show," he said. "I've had this role before, but neither of the children were the right age to play a part. This is something I'll treasure probably more than the children will."

Celia Keenan-Bolger is "the leader" for her younger sister and brother. "It's fun acting together," Andrew said. "We get along well, but sometimes we argue about who gets the parts."

The three Keenan-Bolgers have performed together before in "Peter Pan," "The Wizard of Oz" and "Sunny Side Up." They are members of the Screen Actors Guild as a result of

acting in commercials. Another cast member, Diedrich Steljes, 13, performed on Broadway for eight months in "The Secret Garden," as Collin. "It was a tough show to do because there were eight shows per week, and I had to go to school, too," Diedrich recalled. He is also a member of the Screen Actors Guild and is performing through the courtesy of the Actor's Equity Association.

"The children in this show have been remarkably well behaved," Patrick Lynch said. "They know their lines and their music, and they've known for a long time. These are very bright kids. I'm sure they do very well in school."

ON STAGE

"The Music Man"

Theater: The Village Players of Birmingham, 752 Chestnut Street, corner of Hunter Boulevard, south of Maple.

Curtain time: 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Jan. 28-29, shows through Feb. 12, 2 p.m. matinee, Sundays, Jan. 30 and Feb. 6.

Tickets: Adults, \$12; students, \$10. Tickets available at the door, but reservations are recommended. Call 644-2075 anytime.

Area restaurants present special dinners

By KEELY WYGNONIK

By the time February rolls around, most of us are sick of winter. It's nice to escape to Florida or the Caribbean, but if time and finances don't allow it, you can get away, at least for the evening, by attending a special dinner, or picking one up. Here are some suggestions.

Morton's of Chicago, The Steakhouse, in Southfield's Oakland

Towne Square Building, just off Northwestern Highway between Civic Center and Labaret, presents an evening of wine and a five course dinner featuring Jeffrey Friedman of Caymus Winery in California's Napa Valley, 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 3. The cost is \$70 per person (all inclusive). Seating is limited, call (810) 354-6006 by Jan. 28, a deposit is required.

Hunan Palace, 38259 W. 10 Mile, Farmington, is celebrating Chinese

New Year, 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6; 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7 through Thursday, Feb. 10. Call 473-3939 for information, reservations.

Oceania Inn of Rochester Hills, 68 N. Adams Road, is celebrating the New Year with a 12-course gourmet dinner, Feb. 10-20. Dinners 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10 through Saturday, Feb. 12 and 6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 13 will feature the Lion Dance. Call (810) 375-9200 for reservations.

Schoolcraft College in Livonia is offering gourmet Valentine's Day dinners to go. For just \$29, two can share a Traverse City Salad, Breast of Chicken Wellington with Madeira wine sauce, wild mushroom rice pilaf, winter vegetable medley, heart shaped cherry tart with chocolate sauce, and truffles with Chambord liqueur.

See RESTAURANTS, next page

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