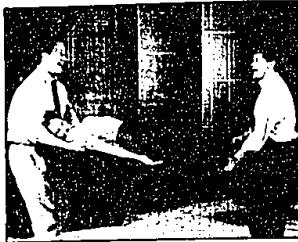


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STREET CRACKS



Relax: Todd Stecho (center) with Jackin' Partner and Tim Pryor show their comic stuff at *The Second City-Detroit*.

Second City's newest revue disappoints

BY BOB'S ADLER
STAFF WRITER

The second revue at *The Second City-Detroit*, entitled "Kevorkian Unplugged," premiered last month down at Woodward and Montclair. And Geoffrey Feiger wasn't the only person disappointed with the comedy.

The success of "Power to the People Mover," the first revue presented by *The Second City-Detroit*, was balanced by the fact that all of the sketches performed by the mostly local troupe were recycled. Granted, *The Second City* has more than three decades of classic material from stages in Chicago and Toronto and an alumni list that reads like some kind of hall of fame, so such a move would be understandable for a new stage and green cast.

But because they have seven months of experience under their collective belts, expectations were high that "Kevorkian Unplugged" might showcase the kind of original, irreverent humor with a local edge that made *The Second City* famous. However, clues were surfacing even before the new revue's opening night all was not completely well at Woodward and Montclair.

Two members of the "Power to the People Mover" cast are already gone. Colin Ferguson of Birmingham left voluntarily to continue his studies at McGill University in Montreal, and Rubin Hucci of Sterling Heights, who showed a great deal of promise, did not have her contract renewed. Ferguson was replaced by Chicago native Todd Stechow, who joins Suzy Nakamura to form a pair of Windy City "ringers" in the Detroit cast. The Detroit presence was further watered down by the fact that Feiger has not been replaced, leaving a down-sized cast of seven for "Kevorkian Unplugged."

To put it plainly, the revue is a disappointment. The cast has no shortage of talent and performs the sketches ably, but the show still lacks a totally fresh Motown taste.

Sure, Detroit references abound in many of the sketches — you'll even see an affectionate poke at the Hitech empire, which brought *The Second City* to Detroit — but only about half of the show appears to be original, locally produced material. If you remember "Mad Libs," you'll see how easy it is to take a funny vignette from *The Second City* vaults, insert a local reference, and presto, it's a Detroit sketch.

One of the evening's best dialogue exchanges came from Tim Pryor of Farmington Hills and Fenton's Jerry C. Minor. Pryor was portraying a well-dressed business man attempting to hail a cab as Minor's homeless person character looks on.

See **SECOND**, B3

AT THE MIKE

Disclaimers 'R Us... This is an adult theme with strong sexual content. That's how Beth Donahue's latest appearance in the area is being promoted. She appears April 19-23 at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle in Royal Oak. Call (810) 642-9900 for reservations.

The Good Life Revisited... John Capone might be the star of NBC's Tuesday night sitcom "The Good Life," but Drew Carey has a habit of stealing the show. Drew is also very true to his stand-up career, which continues with appearances April 22-23 at Ann Arbor's MainStreet Comedy Showcase. Call (313) 996-9080 for reservations.

Two Thumbs Up... Anytime Dennis Wolfberg comes to town, he's well worth the price of admission. He's coming back for a May 4 show at the Royal Oak Music Theater. So just take "Home Improvement" and make sure you're there. Tickets are available at all ticketmaster outlets or by charge at (810) 648-6666.

— Bob Adler

BOP-ping on to new projects

■ BOP (harvey)'s 10-year career has included performing at Bill Clinton's inaugural celebration, a short stint on tour with UB40 and a late-night date tonight with Conan O'Brien. With all that behind them, the band's members are ready to temporarily pursue other projects.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER



Touring most of the last 10 years, has taken its toll on BOP (harvey). Now members of the former East Lansing-based band are ready to take care of their own needs.

"After a decade of playing 200 shows a year, we're gonna do it our way," said bassist/vocalist Danny Stecho.

Their "way," however, may not strike a friendly chord with fans of the tremendously popular reggae funk band. BOP (harvey) plans on spending this summer pursuing other musical projects.

"We're getting on with our lives, hopefully without trashing what we've already done," he said. "It's just that we've said what we wanted to say musically."

Stecho and guitarist Dan Matheny, for example, are starting their own band which will be different from BOP (harvey), according to Stecho who also works as a music coordinator for "Late Night with Conan O'Brien." Lead singer Wordsmith is forming a new band in East Lansing much in the same vein as BOP (harvey). Keyboardist Randy Sly accompanies Teddy Richards and The Verve Pipe as well as doing studio work. The new projects will allow the band to musically expand the focus of BOP (harvey) by getting their minds off it for a while, Stecho said. He and Sly suggested that the split is temporary.

"Nothing's definite. When people ask me that I say, 'Never say never,'" said Sly, a Dexter resident. "At this point, we have a lot of other things going on. When it's the focus of everything we do, it's limiting in some ways," Stecho added.

Although the band promises to "pop up every once in a while," BOP (harvey) will play their last scheduled area appearance at the Majestic in Detroit on Saturday, April 23. BOP (harvey) will also perform the song "Rooster (With His Hands)" from their double live CD "The



Monster Butt Beat Dance Test Monday, April 18, on Conan O'Brien's show.

"We're gonna be rockin' at the homeboys in Michigan," Stecho said via telephone from his New York home.

Sly is equally as excited about playing in front of millions of viewers.

"I'm excited. It's something I've been working for for 10 years. Last week I thought, 'We've got to get on the show,'" he said of late night television.

The Conan O'Brien show performance and the double CD is a nice way to close out "this phase of BOP (harvey)," Stecho said. His band's 10-year career hasn't been without highlights. Band members share some of their favorite stories and photos in the booklet accompanying "The Monster Butt Beat Dance Test." Beyond the personal peaks, is a string of professional successes.

As the band's first gig, everyone was "psyched about the band," Stecho said. Within the first few years after forming, the band toured with UB40, which at the time was one of the only bands with a horn section. The popularity of BOP (harvey), UB40 and other bands, such as Jim Skala Bin, helped pave the way for future horn-laden bands, he said. It hasn't been easy, however, to keep up a seven-piece group.

"The economies of keeping a seven-piece band are a bear. If we did what we're doing now as a four piece, we'd be rich," Stecho said.

Five albums later in the early 1990s, BOP (harvey) moved its base to Rhode Island hoping to solidify an East Coast following. Having achieved that, BOP (harvey) re-

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turned to East Lansing to play a Clinton campaign rally and earned the respect of the then-presidential candidate. He invited the band to play at the "Benetton on the Mall" concert during his inaugural festivities with Little Feat, Toad the Wet Sprocket, Etna James, Blues Traveler and Taj Mahal. They returned to the area to perform during the "Faces of Hope."

For the next few weeks BOP (harvey) is promoting the "The Monster Butt Beat Dance Test" CD. Released on New York's Mulberry Street Records, it traces the history of the band which began as a straight-ahead reggae band. Throughout the last 10 years, the band has also dabbled in ska and funk.

"Now we're into the long-extended jams," Stecho said.

The music has evolved but the "psychedelic and Jamaican" influ-

BOPping around: BOP (harvey), formerly based in East Lansing, will appear tonight on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien." The band also will perform at the Majestic in Detroit April 23.

ences have remained. "The Monster Butt Beat Dance Test" traces the history by including songs off their previous albums — "Nation From Nation," "Live at the Bamboe," "Roadkills," "The Old Post Office," "Bread and Circuses," and "Give Thanks to Me." Previously unrecorded songs such as "Rooster," "History," "Kiss It Away," "Sold Shakedown Party," "Dance Fast" and "Out of the Rain" rounded out 133-minute recording.

"We put out all the stuff we hadn't published yet. There was a backlog of songs that we thought were worth putting out. When we had the idea for the tape we thought we'd put out a double CD. So each case we don't put another one there it is," Sly said.

Touring may have become odd for members of BOP (harvey) but they still possess a fresh attitude about their upcoming Detroit show. "We'll be well rested," he said with a laugh. "It's just gonna be a different approach. It's something that we want to be done, instead of something that has to be done."

BOP (harvey) performs at 10:30 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at the Majestic, 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Doors open at 8 p.m. for the 18 and over show. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster outlets at \$8. For more information, call (313) 853-6700 or (610) 645-6666.



Whirling Road: Nick Hamilton (left), Kevin Gill, Chris Peters and Drew Peters play the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor Thursday, April 21.

Whirling Road finds its route to success

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER

Critical of the music scene, Whirling Road members have steered themselves away from the trail of trendy bands. As a result, this straight and narrow path may lead Whirling Road directly to a record deal.

Even before Whirling Road played its first live show, it piqued the interest of Elektra Records who funded the recording of the band's five-song 1993 EP. Although that's impressive for such a young band, guitarist Chris Peters doesn't see that as a direct ticket to success.

"I will make it clear that we are a tax write-off. They're not dying to sign us. They're not jumping on us by

any means. They're not dangling us in our faces," Peters said. Representatives from the company planning to come to the area to see Whirling Road show to grasp the band's popularity which Peters is building.

"We've basically won over Ann Arbor," he said. "We've definitely moved up pretty quickly." Their attraction has earned them spots for established local acts like The Verve Pipe and national alternatives such as Buffalo Tom.

Confident of his band's success, Peters explains that Whirling Road has little in common with other acts going on now in the Detroit area.

See **WHIRLING**, B3

IN CONCERT

With October Perform at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (pop) (313) 961-MELT
CARRIE NEWCOMER
The Ark, 637½ S. Main St., Ann Arbor, (acoustic) (313) 761-1451
MIDWEST VIDEO APPRECIATION NIGHT
3-2, 1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak, (810) 589-3344

Wednesday, April 20
BUSZ BEDDOO BRIGADE
Stoyan's, 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia, (Jazz) (313) 261-5500
FRANK ALIQUA AND THE ODD BUCK
1815 N. Main St., Royal Oak, (acoustic) (810) 589-3344

With Whirling Road at Blind Pig, 206-208 First St., Ann Arbor, (rock) (313) 996-8555
BOTSFORD BLUES BARN JAM
Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River Ave., Farmington Hills, (Jazz) (810) 474-6920
BUSZ BEDDOO BRIGADE
Stoyan's, 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia, (Jazz) (313) 261-5500
FRANK ALIQUA AND THE ODD BUCK
Ann's, 6750 Cass, Detroit, (Jazz) (313) 852-2155
CROSSBOW WINE
DeVosville Dues II, 13939 Michigan Ave., (810) 589-3344

STANLEY JORDAN
Industry, 15 S. Eganway, Pontiac, (jazz) (810) 336-9299
BANDLION
With Black Market Flowers at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (313) 961-MELT
DANIELLE BRISBOROUGH
Brazil Coffeehouse, 305 S. Main St., Royal Oak, (acoustic) (810) 399-7200
GUTCHY
Ricks, 611 Church St., Ann Arbor, (rock) (313) 996-2747
Thursday, April 21
ROLLINGHEAD

See **IN CONCERT**, B3