# Clothes help set scene in 'Miss Saigon'

"Miss Saigon" plays at the Masonic Temple Theatre in Detroit through July 27. Tickets range from \$16 to \$60, call the Masonic Temple Theatre box office, (113) \$352.2232 or Ticket-master (810) 645-6666.

By KEEN WAGONIK STAF WHITEM BACK ATTON WHITEM BACK stage, Ricky Kelly, wardrobe supervisor for "Miss Saigon," opening Friday at the Masonic Temple Theatre, has his hands full. There are 43 people in the cast, and 450 costumes in the show. "The challenge is training the 13 dressers who will help the cast," and Kelly whose first professional job was dressing Raphael, the Teenage Mutant

Ninja Turtle or their national rock concert tour. We don't treat them like they're just swinging clothes around. We want them to feel like they're part of the show."

Singon, which plays at the Masonic through July 27, is the newest musical by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schookers the creating of Less and the shookers are the creating of Less and the shookers are the shookers are the shookers and the shookers are the shoo

Boubill and Claude-Michel Schonberg, the creators of "Les Miserables." Music for "Miss Saigon" is by Schonberg, with lyrics by Boubill and Richard Maltby Jr., adapted from the original French lyrics by Boubil. "Miss Saigon" tells a story of love and self-sacrifice between a young Vietnamese girl and an American soldier at the time of

#### PREVIEW

the fall of Saigon in 1975. The

the fall of Saigon in 1975. The continues help set the scene making what the cast does on stage more believable.

Attention to detail, and an effort to be as authentic as possible with continues, are some of the things that make "Miss Saigon" a blockbuster musical.

"Originally, the sandals the cast were were made from the threads of old car tires, and the straps were made from bike tubes, just like they were in Vietnam. But they didn't hold up, so we had to come up with an alter-

The Vietnamese wedding dress worn at a small wedding in one of the scenes was made by a Vietnamese dressmaker. The civilian clothes, circa 1970s, including Polyester bell bottoms, were found in a warehouse in New York. They were brand new, exclaimed Kelly.

Dressers need to understand what the show is all about so they won't mistakenly mend clothes that are supposed to look tattered. For example, after Saigon falls, the people are in hiding, and their clothes reflect

their anguish. "It's important that the dressers know that peasant clothing is supposed to be dirty and ripped." Clothes help the audience distinguish between tourists, vendors, and a gang of hustlers in a scene that takes place in Bangkok's Red Light District in the 1970s. They help define the difference between North and

"The costumes really help classify people in the show," explains Kelly. "It adds another dimension. It's subtle, but makes a bold statement without knocking you over the head."

Look for Hugh Gallagher's review of "Miss Saigon" next Thursday in Arts & Entertainment.



## New opera house expands repertoire

The new Detroit Opera House will include performances of opera, dance, musical theater, variety shows and special events in their 1996-97 sesson. In collaboration with the Nederlander Family, which leased the Birmingham Theatre unit 1994, and Olympia Entertainment, the Detroit Opera House, under the management of Michigan Opera Theatre, will host nearly two hundred performances in the upcoming season. "We are delighted that the Detroit Opera House will play such a significant role in further enhancing the wide array of programming for southeastern Michigan," said Michigan Opera House will play such a significant role in further enhancing the wide array of pramming for southeastern Michigan, said Michigan Opera House will now play host to grand-scale international touring productions of dance and musical theater, as well as variety of programs and special events."

For the past few seasons, Michigan Opera Theatre has presented a ballet production as

part of its opera series. With the expanded resources of the Detroit Opera House, the company will as on announce a new series devoted exclusively to dence.

Additionally, Dr. DiChiera announced that the Detroit Opera House has entered into a collaboration with Detroit's two principal presenting organizations, the Nederlander Family and Olympia Entertainment, in which all three entities will work together to provide the Detroit Opera House with an exciting series of musical theater and variety presentations.

The Nederlander Family and Olympia Entertainment, award-winning Broadway shows principal presenting organizations, the Nederlander Family and Olympia Entertainment, and The Second City-Detroit: sports and entertainment facilities.

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The Nederlander Family will maintain its relationship with Michigan Opera Theater by presenting the finest in Broadway musicals at the newly restored Detroit Opera House. In addition, the Nederlanders continue to present full programs at the Fisher and Masonic Temple the enters.

aters.
"We believe it is vital to sup-port Michigan Opera Theatre, and we look forward to continu-

Opera Theater. The theater features a senting capacity of up to 2,900, configured into orchestra seating, grand tier boxes (15 private boxes), mezzanine and balcony senting. The theater also housts a 75,000 square foot stage house and an orchestra pit with a capacity for nearly 100 musicians. The Detroit Opera House

was renovated by Michigan Opera Theatre to accommodate the company's need to present grand-scale productions of opera and ballet. The opera season starts with 'Carmen' in October. Call (313) 874-SING for seaon ticket infor-mation.

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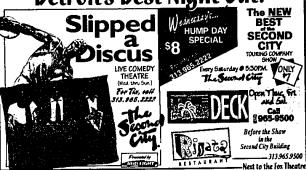
Stay tuned to Arts & Enter-tainment for information about other offerings at the opera



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