

# ARTS & LEISURE

KEELY WYGONIK, EDITOR • 313-953-2105

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 1997 • PAGE 1 SECTION C

CONVERSATIONS



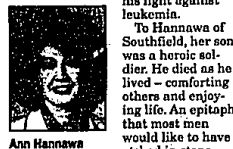
FRANK PROVENZANO

## Mother's memories inspire a lasting portrait of her son

Traditionally, Memorial Day is a day to recall the sacrifices of those who paid the ultimate cost in time of war. For Ann Hannawa, every day is Memorial Day.

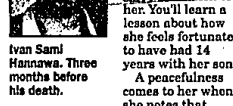
She is a survivor. Her son, Ivan, however, is a casualty in an ongoing war that has cut short the lives of too many mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, daughters and sons.

Two years ago, at an age when most boys are mostly concerned with attracting the attention of girls, playing video games and hanging out, Ivan was desperately holding on in



Ann Hannawa

his fight against leukemia. To Hannawa of Southfield, her son was a heroic soldier. He died as he lived — comforting others and enjoying life. An epitaph that most men would like to have etched in stone.



Ivan Sami Hannawa. Three months before his death.

Look in the eyes of Hannawa and you'll understand that her pain hasn't subsided. She's merely learned to carry on. Listen to her. You'll learn a lesson about how she feels fortunate to have had 14 years with her son. A peace-loving comes to her when she notes that

Ivan means gracious gift of God. It was time, she said, to give back the gift to his creator. She's neither angry, nor resigned. Today, she stands in the calm corridors where wisdom and destiny reveal the secrets of life. She is a woman of faith with a story to tell.

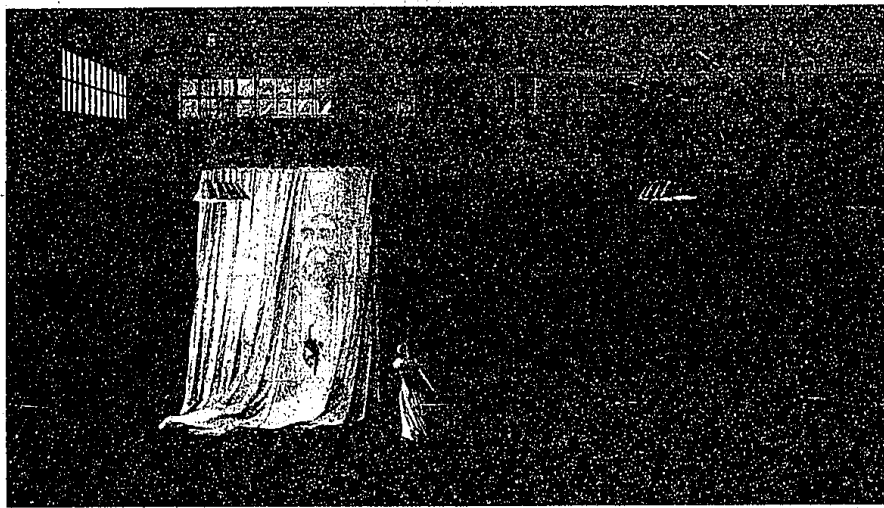
Recalling a hero Shortly after her son's death, Hannawa began recording her feelings. "I had to do something for him so we can have something for him," she said.

Last month, her two-year effort culminated in the publishing of "The Spoken Tear: The Story of Ivan," a remarkable testimony of a mother's undying love for her child.

For a subject that could read as a tearful lament, Hannawa sustains a clear and purposeful narrative voice. Her writing reflects the waves of love and loss that pulsate whenever she speaks Ivan's name, and thinks about the gracious gift that slipped through her arms.

"After Ivan's death I started comforting people," she said. "I never had thought of myself as a strong person." With "The Spoken Tear," Hannawa hopes that others can find solace in her words and the many judiciously selected quotes from poets and philosophers that introduce each

Please see CONVERSATIONS, C3



Ebb & flow: Michigan Opera Theatre performs its first Wagnerian opera in its 26-year history. The expanded orchestra and large-scale set capture the rushing current and grandeur of the Norse myth, "The Flying Dutchman."

# Flying Dutchman

BRAVES EMOTIONAL WAVES

BY FRANK PROVENZANO  
STAFF WRITER

Singing in the chorus of a Wagner opera is a long way from performing karaoke for Joel Mapes. The 24-year-old tenor from Westland will put his lip-synching hobby aside when he makes his first appearance in Michigan Opera Theatre's "The Flying Dutchman," which opens Saturday.

While Mapes is fond of Bach, Schubert and singing Brahms' "Requiem," he also listens to the head-banging music of AC/DC and Guns and Roses as well as the melodic pop crooner Roy Orbison. About two weeks before the opening, he stood on the Detroit Opera House stage for the first time.

"I had chills," said Mapes, who also performs in the Schoolcraft Choir. "I kept thinking Pavarotti stood on the same stage when he theater opened."

Perhaps Mapes' appreciation for gut-wrenching musical catharsis has been preparation for his premier performance as a chorus member in Wagner's wildly beautiful score. After all, in "The Flying Dutchman," like most Wagnerian operas, seat belts and life jackets are required to maintain equilibrium on the rushing emotional seas unfurled by the German composer.

Until the opening of the Detroit Opera House, however, the MOT simply didn't have the resources to perform Wagner. While many operas require about a 50-member orchestra, Wagner's work

demand up to 80 pieces. With the newly renovated opera house, MOT can accommodate an expanded orchestra and large-scale set. In fact, "The Flying Dutchman" is MOT's first Wagnerian opera in its 26-year history.

"He created a philosophy of opera where the orchestra becomes a central figure in the drama," said David DiChiera, general director of MOT. "The role of the orchestra portrays ideas and emotion in far more depth than Italian opera where the orchestra accompanies the singing."

In the melodramatic opera world, it's commonly viewed that if Italian opera is an emotional river traversed by flesh and blood characters, then Wagner's work is where the river meets the bay. A place where mythic characters sail against all odds to find their course, only to meet their tragic fate.

Unlike most other composers, Wagner created the libretto — the text of a musical drama — for his operas. In "Flying Dutchman," he draws on the Norse myth of a sea captain, the Dutchman, who dared to round the Cape of Good Hope

**"The Flying Dutchman"**  
 ■ Where: Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit  
 ■ When: 8 p.m. Saturday, May 31; 2 p.m. Sunday, June 1; 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 4, Friday and Saturday, June 6-7; and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 8.  
 ■ Tickets: Range from \$18 to \$95, (313) 874-7464, (810) 645-6666.

despite sailing into a furious gale. The heroic task was ill-received by the devil, who condemned the captain to sail the sea until Judgment Day.

In the spirit of wicked curses, there's a seemingly insurmountable way out. The captain must find a woman who would love him faithfully until death. The mythic challenge, however, can only take place once every seven years when the captain is allowed to go ashore in search of a woman whose undying love will redeem him.

The Dutchman meets another sea captain whose daughter, Senta, falls deeply in love with the cursed soul. But devotion and loyalty fall prey to suspicion. Trekking the climactic hill of the drama is a ride on an emotional tempest.

"The Dutchman baritone is one of the most demanding in the operatic repertoire," said DiChiera. Mennwiller, three of the most compelling features of the opera are the ocean motif — an orchestra depiction of a storm at sea; the Act Two piano arrangement, the "Spinning Chorus"; and Senta's surging ballad when she proclaims her devotion to the Dutchman.

Please see DUTCHMAN, C2



PHOTO BY BILL ILOVEN

On pins & needles: Alice Moss of Birmingham, a Michigan Opera Theatre seamstress, is in the midst of busy week tailoring costumes for the 65-member cast.

## Behind the scenes

By the time Michael Parr returns home from rehearsals for "The Flying Dutchman," it's nearly 11 p.m. A full day for the insurance manager from Livonia who has also sung with the Dearborn Players Guild.

"I try to exercise in the morning, and nap when I can," said Parr, who has performed with Michigan Opera Theatre for the last four seasons.

A member of the chorus, Parr is performing in his first Wagner opera. "There's a big male choral sound, and a few parts where the male and female singers are

Please see SCENES, C2

MUSIC

Deep breath: Soprano Patricia Willington of Southfield will perform in Friday's "Gottlieb and Friends" concert at Birmingham Unitarian Church.



STAFF PHOTO BY JERRY ZALUTSKY

## Friends come together to perform Gottlieb's compositions

BY FRANK PROVENZANO  
STAFF WRITER

The idea is really quite simple for most of today's composers if they want to perform their new music. Call a few musical friends. Convince them to play — usually for free. Find an available venue. Schedule the gig. Hope word gets out. (Wow! And to think that composing was a lot of work.)

It doesn't hurt to pray for good weather, a big turn out, and while you're having a one-to-one with the arbiter of fate, put in a good word for a recording contract.

Mark David Gottlieb has mastered the routine. Well, nearly. All except that just part about a composing contract. It's not for lack of opportunity or talent.

This Friday at Birmingham Unitarian

Church, in a concert billed as "Gottlieb and Friends," the Royal Oak resident and his musician companions will perform a range of Gottlieb's compositions, including the premier of "Music for English Horn and Piano," "Concerto for Clarinet" and a Spanish folk song, "Española."

Bringing together nine friends for a dinner party is usually a difficult balancing act of schedules and time constraints. Finding time for everyone to rehearse while they hold down full-time jobs and maintain family obligations takes relentless effort, not to mention plenty of creative energy.

"It's an informal network contingent upon availability," said Gottlieb.

In the perceived stuffy classical music world, there's a general attitude that classi-

cal musicians are somehow above the fray of looking for a gig. Gottlieb and friends prove that's hardly the case.

"If we don't look for opportunities, they may not happen," said Nadine Deleury, principal oboist with the Michigan Opera Theatre, who'll perform Gottlieb's duo for violin and cello. Impressed when she first heard a recording of Gottlieb's composition, Deleury organized a concert at the Women's Club in Royal Oak where the piece was first performed publicly.

"We're not just doing Mark a favor," she said. "His music has a great warmth. It's like his heart is talking. Some people say that maybe they've heard his work before because

Please see FRIENDS, C6

■ What: Gottlieb and Friends, an evening of chamber music and songs  
 ■ When: 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 30  
 ■ Where: Birmingham Unitarian Church, 651 Woodward Avenue at Long Pine, Bloomfield Hills  
 ■ Tickets: \$5 (810) 334-8703, Ext. 27