

# Entertainment

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## THE WEEKEND

### FRIDAY



Oakland Community College Java and Jazz Series features Ursula Walker and Buddy Hudson, 8 p.m. Smith Theatre, Orchard Ridge Campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. Tickets \$12, call (248) 471-7660 or (248) 471-7700.

### SATURDAY



Youtheatre opens its 34th season with the new musical "Big Bad Wolf," 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Music Hall, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$7 in advance, \$8 at the door, (313) 963-2366, or (248) 645-6666.

### SUNDAY



Tour of World Gymnastics Championships, featuring all seven members of the 1996 Olympic Gold Medal winning U.S. women's gymnastics team, 3 p.m. at The Palace of Auburn Hills. Tickets \$35, \$27.50 and \$19.50, call (248) 645-6666, or (248) 377-0100.



Hot tix: Maestro Erich Kunzel and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Take Five" with jazzmaster Dave Brubeck in Five Pops Series performances, Oct. 16-19 at Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Concerts 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Oct. 16-17; 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 19. Tickets \$42 to \$17 (box seats \$60), call (313) 833-3700.



Three-dimensional: Diana Van Fossen (left to right) Avril Gentles, and Fiona Davis perform in Meadow Brook Theatre's production of Edward Albee's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, "Three Tall Women."

## Playwright

### COMES TO TERMS WITH MOM IN DRAMA

FRANK PROVENZANO  
STAFF WRITER

Since the days of Euripides, coping with the over-present influence of mothers has made for compelling theater.

Sophocles' tale of Oedipus has caused more than a few restless nights' sleep for pubescent boys. As Freud shrewdly observed: sooner or later, we either run from our mothers, sound like them or end up doing both. Apparently, learning to cope — and affording therapy — are inevitable stops along the way.

Beginning next Wednesday, Meadow Brook Theatre presents a drama derived from a famous playwright's catharsis inspired by his oppressive and unlikely mother (although she is quite likable in the play).

"Three Tall Women" appeals to anyone who has or had a mother," said Geoffrey Sherman, who directs the cast of — who else? — three tall women in Meadow Brook's upcoming production of Edward Albee's 1994 Pulitzer Prize-winning play.

"There's an enormous amount of love in the play," said Sherman. "Albee has achieved peace with his mother, and in the play he shows the way."

The relationship between Albee

■ **What:** "Three Tall Women," a play in two acts by Edward Albee

■ **Where:** Meadow Brook Theatre, Oakland University's Professional Theatre Company, Wilson Hall on the campus of Oakland University, Rochester Hills.

■ **Preview:** 8 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, Oct. 22-24

■ **Opens:** 6 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25-Nov. 16

■ **Performances:** 8 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 2 p.m. Wednesday; 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. Saturday; 2 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

■ **Tickets:** \$18-\$32; (248) 377-3300 or (248) 645-6666

and his mother, however, was far from blissful.

The cantankerous playwright has told interviewers that as an adoptive son, he never felt welcomed — or loved — by his socially ambitious mother. He left the house at age 17, and never went back, until the last days of his mother's life.

The play presents a modern-day allegory as much as collective therapy, a psychological journey in coming to terms with a maternal force that can neither be escaped nor denied.

"Three Tall Women" is a somewhat abstract play. The realistic first act is the superficial, impressionistic painting on which layers and layers of psychological insight will be heaped in act two.

In act one, a 90-something elderly lady spends time "smelling her mortality," alternately sitting in a chair or being hustled to a bathroom. Amid lucid times, she reflects on her childhood, her marriage to an extremely wealthy and elfin man, and her alienation from her son.

Two younger women attend to the contentious geriatric: an eccentric, early 60s companion and a mid 20s woman who has come to help the elderly woman straighten out her finances and estate.

The women congregate in the older woman's opulent bedroom from Bloomingdale arranged against a black velvet backdrop. The act designed by Meadow Brook's Peter Hicks creates the impression that the drama is floating over an omniscient black void.

Appropriately, throughout Albee's four-decades of play writing, his work has been largely defined by how his characters define life by the proximity to

Please see PLAYWRIGHT, E2

## Nancy Gurwin 'Presents' quality shows

BY KEELY WYAGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

Nancy Gurwin Presents opens its 15th season at the Aaron Studio DeRoy Theatre at the Jewish Community Center Saturday, Oct. 18, with "The Sound of Music."

Although she won't be appearing in this show, Gurwin can well identify with Maria, a young novice sent by the sisters to take care of the Von Trapp Family, when she sings — "I have confidence...in me!"

"I performed on Broadway before I got married," said Gurwin, who studied theater in New York. "My husband Don said, 'Here's some money, you have an opportunity to do a show. He thought I'd get it out of my system, but I didn't. I was successful.'"

Gurwin started a dinner theater company, and opened with "I Do! I Do!" at the Botolph Inn in Farmington Hills with Phil Marcus Esner. "We were booked on off nights, Thursdays and Sundays, for three months," she said. "The run sold out, and we stayed eight months."

After that successful run she plugged into the dinner theater circuit presenting musicals and comedies at the former Vittorio's in Livonia and other venues.

"Don has always been supportive," said Gurwin. "He was always there to help me and take care of the kids." Danny, the youngest of their five grown children, is a professional actor.

He starred with his mom in "Annie Get Your Gun" at a dinner theater in Detroit.

"As the years went by, dinner theater became less popular in the area, but by then my name was well known," said Gurwin. "People would ask me when I was putting on my next show."

Truth be told, Gurwin said she was beginning to feel like a vagabond and longed for a home. She approached the Jewish Community Center because she

Please see GURWIN, E2

### "The Sound of Music"

■ **When:** Nancy Gurwin Presents production opens 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18. Additional performances 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 19; 8 p.m. Saturdays, Oct. 25, Nov. 1 and Nov. 8; 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sundays, Oct. 26, Nov. 2 and Nov. 9.

■ **Where:** Aaron Studio DeRoy Theatre, Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield

■ **Tickets:** \$18, \$15 senior citizens, \$13 students (through high school), group rates available. Call (248) 354-0545 or (248) 288-1506.

### Season Schedule:

• "Chorus Line" — Opens Jan. 10  
• "Funny Girl" — Opens March 21

## MUSIC MEMORABILIA

### Exhibit recalls "A Hard Day's Night"

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
STAFF WRITER

Hard to believe, but John Lennon would have celebrated his 57th birthday this month. Lennon, who was murdered in 1980 on the steps of the Dakota in New York City, probably would be surprised to learn of The Beatles continuing popularity, or would he?

Now, the generation which grew up with The Beatles can relive the early years with an exhibition of 32 black and white photographs through Oct. 26 at Laurel Park Place, Six Mile Road and Newburgh in Livonia.

"The Beatles, Liverpool Days" brings back memories of screaming females thronging the fab four wherever they traveled. The rare photos were taken in 1964 by Astrid Kirchherr, fiancée of Stuart Sutcliffe, the Beatles' original bass player, and distinguished photojournalist Max Scheler on the set of "A Hard Day's Night" and at their family homes

in Liverpool. Kirchherr, an aspiring photographer, spent many hours watching the struggling band play clubs in Hamburg, Germany. She dated Sutcliffe and traveled with the group until he died at age 21 from a brain hemorrhage in 1962.

"I think it's a great show and has a multi-generational appeal," said John Sonego, spokesperson for Laurel Park Place. "I'm 39 and barely remember The Beatles. The photos are cultural history. People who grew up with The Beatles can now bring their kids. They've heard the music on the radio and now they can visually experience the phenomena and kind of major impact they had."

The Beatles first appeared on the music scene in the early 1960s. By 1964, they had just returned from America where they'd appeared on the Ed Sullivan show. Their songs dominated the airwaves and "anyone who was anyone" imitated their famous "Roly Poly" haircuts.

"Astrid gave Stuart that haircut," said

Sonego. "A lot of French actors were wearing it and George Harrison walked in and said can you cut mine like that. And that was one of their first claims to fame, the mop top look."

Assigned by the German publication Stern to capture Beatlemania, Scheler asked Kirchherr, a longtime friend of the group, to introduce him. The negatives were never used and are in storage for 30 years before Kirchherr and Scheler collaborated on the book "Liverpool Days."

"The photos are not for sale," said Sonego. "They were published in Astrid's book in 1994. Only 2500 copies were made and now out of print, so this is a rare opportunity to see photos you're not going to see in other places."

So far, fans from San Diego to Florida have viewed the photographs. The images include Lennon and Paul

Please see EXHIBIT, E3



Fab four: Max Scheler took this photograph of The Beatles in 1964. An exhibition of 32 black and white prints from this era is at Laurel Park Place in Livonia through Sunday, Oct. 26.

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