

Music masters help out a friend

By HUGH GALLAGHER
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performance at Carnegie Hall.

The guest list is impressive — guitar masters Chet Atkins, Earl Klugh and Larry Carlton, bluegrass sensation Alison Krauss, jazz saxman Kirk Whalum, trumpeter Marcus Belgrave and blues legend Gary Burton.

"Now Darryl Dybka just needs to find the right distributor for his 'Curiosity Dance' CD."

"Darryl Dybka?"

"The composer-pianist may not be well known to the general public but his long years as a sideman have earned the respect of his fellow musicians.

A 1971 graduate of Redford Thurston High School, Dybka's soft jazz stylings belie his beginnings as a touring musician with Frank Zappa.

"It was a real short tour, but I learned a lot," the quiet-spoken musician said. "It was exciting to go into a sports arena and everyone screaming. I wasn't used to that."

This next gig was closer in spirit to his musical tastes when he joined Detroit jazz guitarist Earl Klugh for six years, including a

moved here in 1985.

Dybka toured with Atkins from 1992 to 1994 and co-produced three of his records. In 1992 he won a Grammy certificate for co-producing the Chet Atkins-Jerry Reed "Sneakin' Around" album.

"The reason he wanted to use me as a composer was to give him a jazzier sound, he was looking to get into new music," Dybka said.

Atkins recorded several of Dybka's compositions and co-wrote several songs with him.

Dybka obviously admires his mentors, Klugh and Atkins.

"I think they're similar, not in what they play but in their appreciation of the guitar and music in general," he said. "They have strong love for their instrument."

Dybka's own musical tastes are rooted in modern jazz.

"I love and listen to a lot of Herbie Hancock, Keith Jarrett, Miles Davis, I like Weather Report," he said.

Dybka said working with Gary Burton, who has recently returned with his big band for several sold-out concerts, was as if he were visiting the Beatles.

Allison Krauss joined on through her brother Viktor, who

plays bass on the album.

"I wanted someone to do a little scatting, not jazz scatting but non-verbal singing to get across an emotion," Dybka said. "I was thrilled about her, she sings beautifully."

He said beauty was a major focus of his music.

"I enjoy more complex harmonies than just simple music," he said.

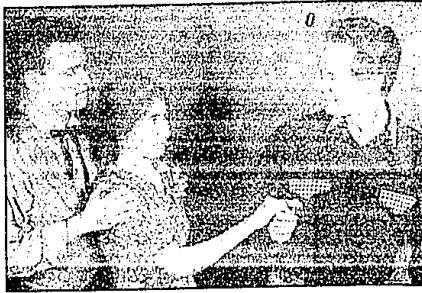
Dybka's music is multi-layered but soft, almost delicate. His work with Atkins on "Jimmy" shows some of the guitarist's country influence.

When asked for his favorite cuts, Dybka chooses his solo work on "Amber Sunshine" and the complex "Five Balloons" with Larry Carlton and flute and sax playing by Denis Sole.

The music is reminiscent of CDs produced by the Windham Hill and Concord labels and Dybka said those are two companies he will be approaching, but he is more interested in his composing and performing.

He's working on another CD even as he tries to peddle "Curiosity Dance."

"I'm having to depend on other people, I don't want to spend a career being a record guy," he said.



On Stage: Zachary Boose (left) of Royal Oak stars as Filo, Amanda Poland as Lizzie and Dean Martell of Livonia as Starbuck in "The Rainmaker."

Local thespians light up the stage

There's "No Business Like Show Business" for talented local and actors and actresses who participate in community theater.

Local thespians are featured in the following upcoming productions.

Zachary Boose of Royal Oak and Dean Martell of Livonia star in the Grosse Pointe Theatre production of "The Rainmaker" by N. Richard Nash. Opening 8 p.m. Thursday, March 11 in the Pries Auditorium of the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms, the show continues 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, through Saturday, March 27. Tickets are \$13, call (313) 881-4004.

Not to be confused with the recent film by the same title, "The Rainmaker" is the classic American play which also became the 1956 film, starring Katherine Hepburn and Burt Lancaster.

It is the story of Lizzie, the only woman in her family, who believes she is plain and will become an old maid. In this romance, set against the backdrop of the drought-ridden Southwest, the charismatic rainmaker Starbuck helps Lizzie to realize that she has a beauty all

her own.

Sarah Hope Hedeen of Livonia is directing "Quilters" by Barbara Damashek and Molly Newman to be presented March 12-14, March 19-21 and March 26-27 at the North Rosedale Park Community House, 18445 Scarsdale Road, south of McNichols. Call (313) 531-0431 for ticket information.

Hedeen performed "Quilters" five six years ago at Trinity House Theatre in Livonia. A musical, "Quilters" celebrates life in pioneer America in the late 1800s. Seven women depict the true stories of over 150 characters.

Stagecrafters is presenting the comedy "Light Up the Sky," by Moss Hart, March 12-28 at the historic Baldwin Theatre in downtown Royal Oak. Tickets are \$10-\$12. Call (248) 541-6430. A special dinner package is available from Illusions Bar & Grill in downtown Royal Oak, call (248) 588-1313.

The production features Rosemary Goss of Southfield, Maureen Cook of Beverly Hills, Mark and Linda Hammell of Lathrup Village, Tania Velinsky of Royal Oak, Bridget Michael of Walled Lake, and Tom Kreil of Royal Oak. Joy Kaplan of Lathrup Village directs.

Actresses from page E1

CBS commercial, Mason has hoped her skills behind as well as in front of the footlights. As a director, she's managed to draw thunderous applause for Jackson Productions' "The Fantastics" and Trinity House Theatre's "Jugger's Rain" and "The Boys Next Door." She expects "Grace & Gloria" to do the same because it deals with the topical issues of life support and right to die.

"This play is well-written and beautifully crafted," said Mason. "The dialogue weaves in and out. This Appalachian lady is surrounded by quilts in her cabin and the play is like that patchwork. It's a very truthful play and it's very hopeful. It appears Grace has nothing left. At the end, that's not the case. Our lives are more than our apparent or

seeming wealth."

Preparing to die

Although Dorothy Dunne enjoys doing light comedy, she looks forward to playing a character like Grace, the 90-year-old woman is forced to sell her family orchard to developers. Grace is preparing to die. Dunne watched her own mother go through the process.

"It is a part which connects me to my mother who died in 1981," said Dunne of Livonia. "She was very strong-willed. Nothing held her back. She raised seven children and at the end went through a radical mastectomy. I can feel Grace's pain. My challenge is the serenity and acceptance that Grace has with her life."

Even though Laura Gumina is the exact opposite of Grace — an unsophisticated, uneducated, shoot-from-the-hip woman with a fighting spirit — the hardest part of playing her was learning how to knit. Gumina used her more than 25 years of theatrical experience to create the pain in Grace's voice and eyes.

"You're given the words by the playwright, but the actor has to take those words and breathe life into them," said Gumina, a Redford resident who's taught theater at Southfield Public Schools, Cranbrook Middle School and the Roper Schools in Bloomfield Hills, and Trinity House's summer youth drama program. "My parents have died. I've suffered a lot of loss, so I felt experienced. Everything Grace said for is in rubble so she has to ask herself what was her life been?"

Elizabeth Lee draws on the emotions she felt when her grandmother was dying of pancreatic cancer. Lee plays the younger woman watching Grace die.

"It's getting in touch with going through that loss," said Lee, a Hazel Park resident who grew up in Birmingham. "You have to let yourself repress emotions that socially we repress. It really makes me reflect on living

life right now, cherishing the relationships I have."

Technical challenges

"Grace & Gloria" did have its challenges though for set designer Gary Grace of Plymouth. Technically, the play tested the abilities of Grace to produce a pump with running water, a wood stove and fire, and to fit all of it along with Grace's bed onto the tiny Trinity House stage.

Sound and special effects were a challenge for Mason and Mark Hammell of Sound Effects because Grace's cabin is in the midst of a construction site.

"Sound was a big challenge because it's the third character," said Mason. "The dynamite explosions and falling trees occur constantly and interrupt Grace's conversations with Gloria."

Joe Garreffa, a graduate of the Detroit High School for the Performing Arts and assistant director, loves the play despite its challenges.

"It's beautifully written," Joe Garreffa, who acted in Trinity House's "Sister Camillo's Kaleidoscopic Cabaret" in November. "The interconnection of the characters. It's a study of life and death and acceptance of both of those."

Clark from page E1

Like You," an original stage musical set by the aftermath of the American Civil War. She also co-wrote the book with Fay Weldon.

Show business is the only business she knows, and if she had the opportunity to do anything else, it would be something wonderful, she said. Hesitating a few seconds, she says, "I'd like to work with refugees. I've been out with the U.N. and would like to go out there in the field instead of just raising money. I'd like to do something worthwhile. Sometimes you think show business is not worthwhile, but then you get a letter from someone who says they probably wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for your music."

Maybe we are doing something worthwhile, but we don't think of it that way at the time."

She's working on a one woman show with a team from Cirque Soleil. "It's a concert with attitudes and special effects," she said. "It's very special. There will be visual and sound effects."

Still, it's hard to picture Clark as anywhere but "Downtown, where all the lights are bright..."

Did she know it would be a hit?

"I knew it was a good song," she said. "But people are the ones who tell you what's a hit. It's like a recipe. You can have all the right ingredients, but there's something that makes it work."

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