

# Entertainment

The Observer

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8 Days a Week

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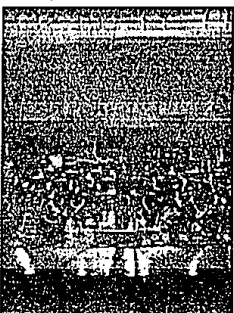
Thursday, May 11, 2000

## THE WEEKEND



Ethan Hawke (left to right), Diane Venora and Kyle MacLachlan star in *Hamlet*, opening today at metro Detroit movie theaters.

## SATURDAY

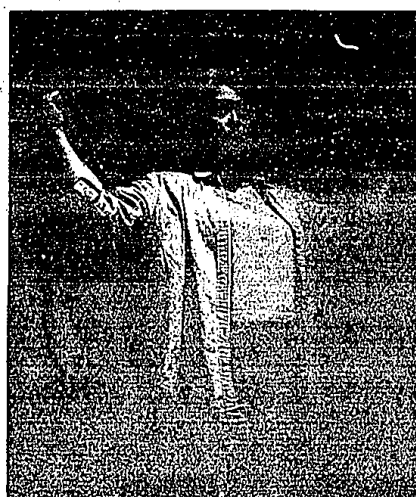


The Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra, the premier youth orchestra of Detroit, celebrates its 30th season, 3 p.m. with a concert at Orchestra Hall. Tickets \$4-\$5, call (313) 576-5111.

## SUNDAY



Medeski, Martin and Wood perform 8 p.m. at Clutch Cargo, 65 E. Huron, Pontiac. Tickets \$22.50-\$33.50, call (248) 645-6666.



Comedic yin yang: Sally Bondi has won accolades for her comic portrayals of 12 characters in *Dreams of Martha Stewart*. Rob Dubac, below right, wrote and stars in *Male Intellect*. ... an oxymoron?

By FRANK PROVENZANO  
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Merely asking, "What do men and women really want?" usually opens the psychobabble floodgates. Out flows a stream of armchair analysis about love, and the nature of relationships delivered with Oprah-like, drive-thru efficiency.

The popular theory goes: Men are one-dimensional hedonists, and women, well, they're grounded all right. Grounded in making men's lives a miserable series of practical tasks.

And so it goes. ... But what's feeling who? If the eclectic 1980's taught anything, it was that there's no use for stereotypes, and definitely a blurring of differences between the genders. Despite all the talk about diversity, men and women are still more different than alike.

In the spirit of new millennium-age male sensitivity and female liberation, two comic plays — *Dreams of Martha Stewart* and *Male Intellect* — an oxymoron?

**On Stage**  
■ *Dreams of Martha Stewart*, a one-person play written by Pamela Parker, starring Sally Bondi; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 12-13; 3 p.m. Sunday, May 14. Friday show is sold out. Tickets \$27.50-\$37.50.  
■ *Male Intellect*, a one-person play written and starring Robert Dubac; Tuesday-Sunday, May 16-21, performances 7:30 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday; 5 & 9 p.m. Saturday; 7 p.m. Sunday. Tickets \$15 (opening night only), \$20-\$35. Where: Both shows at the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 360 Madison Avenue, Detroit. Call (313) 963-2386 or (248) 645-6666 for tickets and information.

Note: Talkback sessions will be held after May 23 & May 28 shows.

maron? — at Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts pool away at the eternal question about what each gender desires. The revelations are neither simple or complicated. Just funny, and sometimes, painfully true.

While the play titles have a charming accessibility, don't expect anything remotely similar to male or female bonding. ... Playwrights Pamela Parker and Rob Dubac have constructed a range of truthful characters in their respective one-person plays.

In the tradition of Betty Crocker and Donna Reed, Stewart is held up as the contemporary model of female domesticity. Of course, her uncanny sense of marketing and reinvention makes her firmly rooted in the cash-cow present.

For playwright Parker, the choice of Stewart was both symbolic and

## Nothing but the truth?

COMEDIES LOOK AT WHAT MEN, WOMEN REALLY WANT



one made from admiration.

"I find her fascinating. She's teaching how to be a better housewife, how to take something that might be shabby, and make it elegant," said Parker in her heavy Southern accent. (Although Stewart hasn't seen Parker's work, she has commu-

Please see GENDER, E2

## Robert Bradley — discovered, uncovered

Robert Bradley's Blackwater Surprise sounds more like a story title than a five-piece band. Here's how the fairy-tale goes.

Three young Detroit musicians are playing in the studio when — much to their surprise — they hear a blind street-singer crooning outside. They approach him and after time convince the well-traveled Alabama native to join the band.

Robert Bradley's Blackwater Surprise may have been blessed with a fable-like beginning, but the band that's reinventing the soulful Motown sound says now is the *Time To Discover* what Detroit music is all about.

With a new album of the same name, and the addition of keyboardist and Detroit Music Award winner Tim Diaz, RBBS sounds stronger than ever. Of course radio and MTV exposure never hurts. Neither do tours with mega-stars like Dave Mathew's Band, Beck and Sonic Youth, appearances on *Conan O'Brien* or write-ups in *The New Yorker*. Let's start at the beginning.

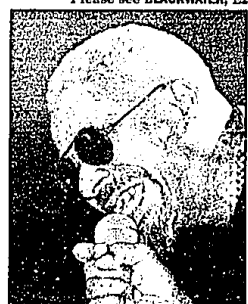
Chapter one

Robert Bradley discovered music around age 6. "I realized I could carry a melody and started singing along with the radio," he said in a phone interview from Mt. Pleasant. Trained on tunes by Buddy Holly, Johnny Cash,



STEPHANIE A. CASOLA

What: Celebrate with Robert Bradley's Blackwater Surprise at the CD release party for *Time To Discover*. When: 8 p.m. Saturday, May 20. Where: Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Tickets: \$15, call (248) 544-3030.



Surprising: Robert Bradley was one of the performers at the 2000 Detroit Music Awards April 14 at Detroit's State Theatre.

## THEATER

### Director brings more realism to 'The Sound of Music'

By KEELY WYONIK  
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Watching *The Sound of Music* on stage or TV is an emotional experience for a lot of people. It evokes memories, makes you want to "Climb Every Mountain," and say "I Have Confidence."

"I see people crying in the audience — it touches their emotions," said Jeannette Lehman who portrays Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music* opening Wednesday, May 17, at the Masonic Temple Theatre in Detroit. "It reaches human values we can all relate to — love, hope in the face of adversity. The music is inspiring, it touches people in so many different ways."

Richard Chamberlain stars as Captain Georg von Trapp and Meg Tilly as Maria Rainer in this Broadway revival directed by Susan H. Schulman.

Lehman has portrayed Maria five different times in *The Sound of Music*, but this is her first time portraying Mother Abbess. She's enjoying the show and the part she's playing. "Maria and Mother Abbess have a lot in common," said Lehman. "They both grew up in the mountains and have the same love of life and adventure. The Mother Abbess chose a more spiritual life, she sees herself in Maria."

## The Sound of Music

When: Wednesday-Sunday, May 17-21; performances at a Wednesday-Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday; 1 p.m. Thursday; and 7:30 a.m. Sunday. Where: Masonic Temple Theatre, Detroit. Tickets: \$25-\$55, call (248) 645-6666.

"The nuns weren't honestly represented in the original play," said Lehman. "They don't stand around and sing. Work and prayer are spiritual commitments, they're all the same. The Mother Abbess is elected, it's very democratic."

There's lots of attention to detail in this *Sound of Music*, and more sense of place and time. "While the creative team was walking around Salzburg our sound designer Tony Meola recorded the bells," said Lehman. "The bells the audience hears are actually the bells of Salzburg. The costumes are gorgeous."

Schulman and her creative team have brought more realism to this production. They visited the Nonnberg Abbey in Austria to learn how the nuns really lived.

"Based on the book by Howard Lind-

say and Russell Crouse with music and lyrics by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, *The Sound of Music* opened at Broadway's Lunt-Fontanne Theatre on Nov. 16, 1959. The production won seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and ran for 1,443 performances.

The 1965 film version, starring Julie Andrews as Maria, earned five Academy Awards, including Best Picture.



At work: Jeannette Lehman and cast in a scene from *The Sound of Music*.



Rebecca Zimmerman's colorful teapot is one of the items you'll see at the 19th annual Birmingham Fine Art Festival 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, May 13 and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, May 14 in downtown Birmingham. Call (248) 644-0866 or (248) 644-1700 for information.