SHAW

FROM PAGE BY

most so the set had to fit through. The moment of truth is when it comes through the

door."
The week before Candida The week before Candida opened for previews Meadow Brook Theatre was a flurry of activity. Lights needed to be focused per Shaw's design. Shaw staff worked with MIT staff to ensure the production, which was already fully realized, came off without a fitch. The Shaw tech staff remain through Jan. 11 when MIT staff takes over. There was a lot of advanced planning, said Bloomfield. We've scheduled post show discussions after Sunday matices beginning Jan. 12, and

nees beginning Jan. 12, and MBT with Oakland University English department chairman

Bruce Mann will present a stage reading of GBS vs. GKC, a play about conversations between the two literary giants George Bernard Shaw and G.K. Chesterton (2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28) and it's free. A Shaw Film Festival begins Jan. 15, and our opening presentation and our opening presentation (Jan. 10) features a discussion

(Jan. 10) features a discussion with Shaw's new artistic director Jackie Maxwell.

I saw Candida this summer in Niagara and was very impressed with members of the company and the job Jackie Maxwell had done of directing. Shaw can be ponderous. With Jackie directing it, it just flew by.

Jackie directing it, it just flew by.

One of Maxwell's goals as the newly-appointed artistic direc-tor is to make Shaw known to a wider audience.

"Several years ago, Shaw Festival had taken its work around but as so often happens finances dictate what a compa-

'I've found my biggest challenge so far is the actual complexity of putting a season together, building a season and programming three theaters differently."

artistic director, Shaw Festival

ny does," said Maxwell, who served as Shaw artistle director designate for the 2002 season under then-artistic director Christopher Newton. We're interested in getting our work out a little bit to encourage people to come but it's hard to do every year. We have 11 shows to put on ourselves.

"Candida's is not a huge pruduction and Shaw's a delight to do. It's a lovely campact piece, a comedy with bite to it. The thing that's really fun is Shaw was a very subscraive and provocative writer. Candida is a romantle triangle. It makes you

sit back and wonder about what transpires in a marriage. Shaw was pre-feminism, pre-Suffragete, always poking his finger at the establishment. Candida has a lot of good juice to play with. It's the balance of updating it but not changing any of it and making sure it is in its period.

Maxwell plans to do plenty of thinking about the 2004 season on the drive down from Niagara-on-the Lake. The theater's mandate is Shaw and his contemporaries (1856-1950)

contemporaries (1856-1950) but Maxwell hopes to include contemporary plays about

those times by playwrights like Tom Stoppard who's dealt with that period with a contemporary view. In the meantime she's bringing the set model down for the set of Chekhov's Three Sisters which she'll direct in March.

"The cornerstone is Shaw. That keeps the bar pretty high. It needs to measure up to his wit. I worked almost a full year with Christopher Newton so I could be around to see what makee it work. I've found my biggest challenge so far is the actual complexity of putting a season together, building a season and programming three theaters differently, and easting a company."

company." Maxwell's years of experience Maxwell's years of experience did prepare her for the job. Borrs in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Maxwell was involved with youth theater by age 8 and had her actor's equity card by 13. She studied drama at the University of Manchester and acted in England and Ireland before moving to Canada in 1978. There she worked exten-

before moving to Canada in 1978. There she worked extensively as a free-lance director. She presently teaches directing to postgraduate students at the University of Turonto.

"My first idea was to become a world famous actor," said Maxwell. "I trained in England, came to Canada shortly after where I discovered it wasn't really acting I was interested in. As an actor, you're more focused on your character. As a director, you're focused on many things.

"Candida is a lovely piece. I'm looking forward to taking it to another area and meeting people. Making connections is part of my job. I'm interested in seeing what other companies are doing. Artists have to cross-fertilize."

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DVD boxed sets are big sellers

BY DAYID GERMAIN AP MOVIE WRITER

Boxed-set mania has fully gripped the DVD market, with a wealth of collectible sets that package film series, best-loved movies by an actor or director, television miniseries and full seasons of TV shows.

Here are some popular DVD sets:

Band of Brothers — Executive producers Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg delivered one of television's greatest achievements, a 13-part minis-cries chronicling the World War II campaigns of an airborne compa-ny from D-Day to the Battle of the Bulge to the capture of Hilder's hideout at Berchtzspaden. The six-dise set is loaded with military background and includes an 80-

minute documentary featuring surviving members of the compa-ny. DVD set, \$119.99. (HBO)

mg. DVD set, \$119.99. (HBO)

Baz Luhrmann's Red
Curtain Trilogy — All three of
Baz Luhrmann's gloriously
romantie films — Moulin
Rouge, Williams Dhakespeare's
Romeo and Juliet and Strietly
Ballroom — gathered in a love
by five-dize set. Included is the
bonus dise. Behind the Red
Curtain, which explores the
heightened-reality style of
Luhrmann's serven and stage
creations. DVD set, \$69.98.
(20th Century Fox)

■ The Lord of the Rings: The Inc Lord of the kings: The Fellowship of the Ring —
Special Extended DVD Edition—One of last year's best films gets even better with the addition of 30 minutes of footage.

This three-and-a-half-hour cut

B The Civil War — Ken
Burns' masterful PBS documentary remains a benchmark
for breathing life into dusty history. The five-dise set contains
audio commentary by Burns,
background on Abraham
Lincoln, Rubert F. Lee, Ulysses
S. Grant, Frederick Douglass
and other Civil War figures, and
interviews with Burns' collaborators, including Jay Ungar and
Molly Mason, creators of the
memorable theme tune.
Ashokan Farewell, DVD set,
\$129.98. (Warner Bros.)

Ints unce-ana-namentor adds choice moments with elf queen Galadriel; hobbits Frodo, Sam and Bilbo; and human and elf lovers Aragorn and Arwen. The four-dise set is packed with behind-the-scenes material.

DVD set, \$39.99. (New Line)

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ICE

FROM PAGE BI Zoological Society and Domino's Retreat en Drillithodid Ialaid. Just before Christman he began crasting individual sculptures which will decorate the front of businessed during the festival. A cartoon-like golfer, a moose and other animals, both the Bullder (a favorite of his son), a teapot, soda and popcorn, a liberty bell, mushrooms and a businessman standing on his head are among the sculptures. "I tell my students (several of whom will compete in Plymouth) it needs to have some kind of draw, said Wakar. "It has to be pleasing to my eye, attractive to me for varied reasons, I've exposed myself to a Zoological Society and

Il has to be pleasing to my eye, extractive to me for varied reasons. I've exposed myself to a lot of ideas over the years. I search for other art ideas, not just aculpture but I look at drawing and painting. The carving has to have strong emotional values but can have strength of content without beauty. At times pieces stand strong or individual recrits. Certain styles of art don't fodge well against each other. Take for instance a structured Eifel Tower and an elegant and flowing Fegaus. They both have strong individual elements. It's difficult to say this one is butter than this one.

The bottom line for the ACF is food presentation. If you're girling by TICA (National I co Carving Association) rules, it risolves around the technical asports, but whichever you're still pressed for time because it's a timed competition. And thre's the safety issue, If you see tools expired and around a carver, something is not right. They're being rushed or they haven't planned out property. You do naye the freedom to carve what you want, but a competitor makes a decision on searficing.

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than what you start out with."
Gone is the grand scale of the
10-block team competition that
ran from 6 p.m. Friday through
Saturday at 2 p.m. It was too

ran from 6 p.m. Findy through saluriday at 2 p.m. It was too grueling on carves and too noisy for residents. Though power tools were forbidden after midnight, some residents still complained. But that doesn't mean large-scale sculptures are a thing of the past, Festival organizer Mike Watts promises "all-new sculptures including a Fantasyland of film figures tilled Frozer Chiema. Tits going to be a tribute to the movies - Harry Fotter, Lord of the Rings, Monsters, Inc., Spiderman, said Watts. There are all kinds of activities going on in addition to the competitions, Including at Whater Lardy Shades and we provide the saluriday of the saluriday and we with Sacco. a Cultan-based juzz group to take further works and we of the festival, or try for-carving at the Plymouth Community 4xt 2 council try ice-carving at the Plymouth Community Arts Council.

try ice-carving at the Phymouth Community Arts Council. There are new shops and restaurants to explore. Dan Rowlson, Kevin Euright and Doug Ganha will be there for the competition. The Oakland Community College chef instructors will bring students to test their chainsaw-wielding skills against carvers from Henry Fund Community College, Schooleraft College, Macomb Community College, Schooleraft College, Macomb Community of Michigan, But before then they warm up with a multi-block carving, A 25-block Harry Potter vignette Egins taking shape Tuesday, Jan. 14, "I tell my students to practice, to do something on their level of ability and to complete it," said Rowkson, who's partices and Rowkson, who's participated in the first via discrete it.

inated in the featival since the first event 21 years ago. "A big thing, not only with pros, is completing it. Students take on too much and end up not able to finish it. "Originality isn't as impor-tant on the student level. What they need to fores on it was

they need to focus on is prac-ticing so they feel comfortable. Mentally they're under pres-Nemally they're under pressure as in any sport, People are watching. You have to preplan. Yoo have to do this particular carving six times before you compete. It's a three-dimensional art form. There's no color and the medium is difficult to work. It breaks.

Sufery is another important consideration. Line judges make sure injuries are kept to a infinitum.

"They're monitoring for safety," said Rowlson. "It's an

safety, said Rowlson. "It's an extremely dangerous situation they're involved with." Ganhs couldn't agree more. Hands couldn't agree more he learned while a student at the Culinary Institute of America in New York. Ganhs was a member of the fee-carving club there. This year, in addition to coordinating OCC students from the Farmington Hills campus, Ganhs has signed up for the team professional competition with Detroit Athletic Club chef John Miller. After Plymouth, they all head for competitions in Frankenmuth Jan. 31-Feb 2.

11 tell them you're in the

Jan. 31-Feb 2.
"I tell them you're in the same arena as another person. You really have to be careful. I rour tearly me to be carried. It tell them to carve something you're comfortable with, take it as a learning experience for the first couple of competitions," said Ganhs, who's been

tions, said Gams, who so been carving for 10 years. 'And to keep their eyes and ears open. There's so many great carvers out there.

'T'm personally going to be

out there.

'Tm personally going to be pushing myself, raising the bar, going against what I teach my students. I want to try to build their confidence and get them going gradually.

Sultan Sharrief admits he's not going with thoughts of winning a competition but for the experience. He competed with the Romulus High School team for two years but feels he still has a lot to learn. In fact, that's why he started the ice-carving colo at the University of Michigan, where he's a sophomore.

The such a unique thing to do, said Sharrief, a film major. You see the carvings at weddings and wonder how's that done. It's a whole new art form, We did a workshop in February and had a great turnout with seven students. We're taking

and had a great turnout with seven students. We're taking seven students. We're taking seven individuals and three teams of two. We aren't really going to sweep the competition. We just want to hang around as a reinforcement - am I doing this right? Am I holding a tool right? There's so much going on and you have to be aware of what everyone else is doing. I'm trying to simplify. We practiced before everyone left for the holdays and we're looking to get in extra practice in the last two weeks."

Have an interesting idea for a story? Call Observer & Eccentric arts reporter Linda Ann Chomin at (734) 953-2145 or send e-mail to Ichomin⊉ oe. homecomm.net