

stage

NOW PLAYING

Here are major area offerings in theater, dance and comedy at a glance. For details on tickets and curtain times, refer to the calendar, which begins on Page 14.

DANCE: SOLOS WITH PIANO WITH MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV

Dance legend performs an evening of solo contemporary movement by American and European contemporary choreographers, including Lucinda Childs, Tere O'Connor, Michael Clark and Cesc Gelabert, under the auspices of the Ann Arbor Summer Festival. He's accompanied by pianist Pedja Muzijevic, recipient of Julliard's coveted William Petchek Award. July 3 at Power Center. **SOLD OUT.**

BEER MONEY

Composed of 7-10 players, Beer Money plays different games on stage that put the players in odd situations. Members then ask for suggestions from the audience that the troupe must work within that game. July 3 and 5 at Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase.

PLAY: "BLITHE SPIRIT"

Guy Sanville directs Noel Coward's classic comedy about a writer haunted by the ghost of his late wife, who shows up during a seance and refuses to leave. Worse — she may be planning murder. Malcolm Tulip, Janet Maylie and Michelle Mountain star. July 3-6 and also Wednesdays-Sundays through Aug. 30 at Purple Rose Theatre Company, Chelsea.

PLAY: "A WORK IN PROGRESS"

Brass Tacks Ensemble presents local playwright James Ingagiola's new work, about a man trying to liberate his creativity (and himself) only to find that he is being held back by the very people he thought were supporting him. Tensions rise and secrets are revealed, as the playwright are left wondering who his friends really are. And for that matter, who he is. Cast includes Anne S. Rhoades, Rob Sulewski, Jeffrey Steiger, Gulshirin Dubash and others. July 3-6 at Performance Network, as part of the TreeTown Performance Festival.



Kate Peckham (from left), Janet Maylie and Michelle Mountain in "Blithe Spirit": Through Aug. 30 at The Purple Rose Theatre in Chelsea.

an ever-shifting and always topical zany brand of political satire. The Steps have earned the reputation for being the only group in Washington funnier than Congress. Get your tickets early — these shows usually sell out. July 4 (two shows) at Power Center.

SHANGRI-LA CHINESE ACROBATS

Under the direction of acrobatic legends the Hai family, this Taiwanese troupe interprets the precision and grace of an art form honed by more than 25 years of training and discipline. Expect a flamboyant mixture of daredevil movement, magic, dance, comedy, and extraordinary stunts. July 5 (two shows) at Power Center.

DANCE: "DANCING IN SUMMER"

Terpsichore's Kitchen presents this Tree Town Performance Festival showcase of modern dance works by independent choreographers. The program includes pieces by artists whose works have been shown both nationally and internationally. June 10-13 at Performance

fast-paced new comedy by Ypsilanti playwright Adam Heskett, intended for mature audiences. James Frounfelter directs; Aral Gribble II, Laurel Hufano, Evan Kaufmann, Christa Cox and Michelle Haas star. July 10-13 at Riverside Arts Center.

COMEDY: ROSS BENNETT

Bennett's topics seem tame enough at the outset. But in the telling, the audience finds out about marsupials, feminists, compulsive dieting, white male fear and liberation, evolving sexual desires and animal-rights activism. More than just a stream of consciousness, it's a stream of awakening consciousness. Probably the only stand-up comedian working who was trained at West Point Military Academy, Bennett's made more than 20 TV appearances, including "Evening at the Improv," "Comic Strip Live," "Comedy Tonight," "Entertainment Tonight" and more. July 10-12 at Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase.

INDIVIDUAL DECONSTRUCTION 2003

"Alice in Phantasmagoria" puppet performance. All area artists who attend are encouraged to wear a piece of artwork around their neck. July 11-12 at Dreamland Theatre.

MUSICAL: "PIPPIN"

Dexter Community Players offer this musical story about the trials and tribulations of Charlemagne's son Pippin, the prince of the Holy Roman Empire, who's dedicated his life to the pursuit of the a more fulfilled life. Songs include "Corner of the Sky," "No Time at All," "With You," "Magic to Do" and "Spread a Little Sunshine." Brendan Bachman, Greg McKeighan and Liz Emmerling star. Directed by Daniel Rutz. At Dexter High School Center for Performing Arts July 11-13 and 18-19.

PUPPET SHOW AND CHILDREN'S CONCERT: THE DREAMLAND PUPPET TROUPE AND MR. LAURENCE

Mister Laurence, accompanied by his prerecorded backup group The Play Money Band, offer original alternative children's music. The Dreamland Puppet Troupe presents

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