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ROCK ISLAND FINE ARTS EXHIBITION Augustana College Art Gallery Friday, March 31, through Sunday, April 30 The Augustana College Art Museum and Rock Island Art Guild will kick off the 30th Annual Rock Island Fine Arts Exhibition on Friday, March 31, from 4:30 to 6:30 p. m. The annual juried exhibit, being held at the Augustana College Art Gallery, is open to visual artists working in any media (except video) who are based within 150 miles of the Quad Cities. This year's event features former Western Illinois University art professor Fred Jones as juror, and more than \$3,000 in awards – including the Sally MacMillian Watercolor Award – will be presented beginning at 5:40 p.m. The exhibition will also feature a drawing award in memory of G. Pierson Brauch, an artist and 40-year member of the Rock Island Art Guild, and will remain open throughout April during normal art-gallery business hours: noon to 4 p.m., seven days a week. Admission to both the opening and the exhibit itself are free to the public. For more information, contact Sherry Maurer at (309)794-7231. – **Jesse Virgil**

### **QUAD CITY ARTS VISITING ARTISTS** **March through May**

The performers brought in as part of the Quad City Arts Visiting Artist Series are, of course, very accomplished musicians – why else would they be here? But do you realize just how *smart* these people are? In March, Quad City Arts presents the gorgeous chamber music of the Daedalus String Quartet – performing a public concert at Bettendorf's Redeemer Lutheran Church on Saturday, March 25 – whose members hold degrees from Juilliard, the Cleveland Institute, and Harvard. Saturday, April 8, brings with it a public performance by violinist extraordinaire Movses Pogossian – who earned an advanced degree from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow – at Bettendorf's Rivermont Collegiate. And in May, Quad City Arts' 2005-6 series wraps up with a visit by the University of Texas Pan American Mariachi ensemble, who will amaze the public with their infectious, rhythmic syncopations at Davenport's Capitol Theatre on Saturday, April 29. And you know *they've*

got to be smart; "university" is baked right into the title! For further information on the Visiting Artists Series, call (309)793-1213 or visit <http://www.quadcityarts.com>

**– Mike Schulz**

**GALACTIC**

**Iowa Memorial Union**

**Wednesday, April 12, 8 p.m.**

On April 12, at the Iowa Memorial Union's second-floor ballroom at the University of Iowa, Galactic will perform material from its fourth and latest studio CD, *Ruckus*, which features a cover of General Public's 1980s soul ballad "Tenderness." Galactic's sound, according to a University of Iowa press release, consists of "a mix of catchy pop hooks, vocal tunes, jazz, funk" and "electronic edge," and a

*New York Times*

review said

*Ruckus*

has "lean bass lines, stuttering drumbeats, chords placed coolly on the backbeat, and melodies like bluesy epigrams" that "add up to some of the most danceable music on earth." The New Orleans-based ensemble formed in 1994, and before

*Ruckus*

released

*Coolin' Off, Crazyhorse Mongoose, Late for the Future*

, and the live

*We Love 'Em Tonight*.

Doors open at 7 p.m., and the show begins at 8 p.m.; tickets are \$20, and can be purchased from the University Box Office at (319)335-3041 or through Ticketmaster: (563)326-1111 or <http://www.ticketmaster.com>

**– Jesse Virgil**

**LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO**

**Hancher Auditorium**

**Saturday, March 4, 5:30 p.m.**

Grammy-winning artists Ladysmith Black Mambazo – who first found worldwide fame in 1986, when Paul Simon asked them to play on his *Graceland* album – will perform at Hancher Auditorium in Iowa City on Saturday, March 4. Founded in 1974 by Joseph Shabalala, Ladysmith Black Mambazo has released more than 30 albums, including

*Raise Your Spirit Higher*

(Grammy winner for Best Traditional World Music Album),

*No Boundaries*

(Grammy nominee for Best Contemporary World Music), and its latest release,

*Long Walk to Freedom*.

The group's music is performed in their native language of Zulu, which Shabalala explains has "three major sounds – a high keening ululation, a grunting, puffing sound that we make when we stomp our feet, and a certain way of singing melody." According to reviewer J. Poet of Yahoo! Music, "When they [Ladysmith Black Mambazo] hit a low rumbling note, you can literally feel the power of their voices in your body." The show begins at 5:30 p.m., and tickets are

available by calling (800)426-2437 or visiting  
<http://www.hancher.uiowa.edu>

– **Jesse Virgil**

## **COMEDIES**

### **March through May**

We've all heard the oft-recited proverb "Laughter is the best medicine." If that adage is indeed true, area theatre fans will be positively *swimming* in feel-good elixirs this spring, as a host of stage comedies hit the boards. On the schedule through the end of May: Playcrafters Barn Theatre knocks out the baseball comedy *Ending Third* *Rou*

March 3 through 9; the Richmond Hill Barn Theatre reveals the comic mystery *Cliffhanger*

March 30 through April 9; the Shakespearean troupe Prenzie Players performs the Bard's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

at the Masonic Temple of Rock Island March 31 through April 8, while the St. Ambrose University theatre department gives Shakespeare a whirl of its own with *Much Ado About Nothing*

April 21 through 23; across the river, Augustana College's theatre students have a laughter two-fer with *Black Comedy*

and

*The Real Inspector Hound*

April 28 through May 7; Davenport's New Ground Theatre delivers the sophisticated relationship comedy

*String Fever*

May 26 through June 7; and really dark laughs – and I mean *really*

dark – come courtesy of My Verona Productions'

*The Pillowman*

at ComedySportz May 26 through June 3. –

**Mike Schulz**

## **GEORGE STRAIT AND THE LIPIZZANER STALLIONS**

### **The Mark of the Quad Cities**

**Friday, March 3, and Friday, March 10**

Granted, they're not on the same bill at the Mark of the Quad Cities, and they're certainly not in the same performance genre. But I'm thinking that the much-beloved, Grammy-winning country superstar George Strait – who will perform at the Mark on Friday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m. – and the thrilling, "world famous" Lipizzaner Stallions – appearing there on Friday, March 10, at 3 and 7 p.m. – would make for a *fantastic* show-biz team. Consider: Strait could sing "Carried Away," and the majestic stallions could parade him around the stage while performing one of their exquisite equestrian ballets. Then, Strait could launch into a soulful rendition of "If You Can Do

Written by Mike Schulz & Jesse Virgil  
Tuesday, 28 February 2006 18:00

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Anything Else,” and the world-famous ones could wow the Mark crowds with the astonishing leaps and maneuvers that have fascinated audiences for 36 years. And don’t even get me started on what magic “The Cowboy Rides Away” could lead to. Or “Cowboys Like Us,” for that matter. Sounds perfect. You don’t agree? Catch both events and  
*then*

argue. For more information or tickets, visit  
<http://www.themark.org>

– Mike Schulz

### **PASSIONATE OBSERVER**

**Figge Art Museum**

**Thursday, March 16 and Saturday, May 6, through Sunday, July 30**

To some, Eudora Welty is the greatest punchline in *Simpsons* history. (“*Coming, Eudora!*”) But to the *rest of* the planet, she’s one of the greatest writers and photographers our country has ever produced. Welty’s achievements will be celebrated in a pair of events at the Figge Art Museum, in conjunction with the current Figge course “Eudora Welty’s Short Stories: Photographic Vision & Writing Voice.” On Saturday, May 6, the museum will unveil its exhibit

*Passionate Observer: Eudora Welty Among Artists of the Thirties*

, which will capture – in more than 50 prized photographs and more than 100 additional works by artists from across the country – Welty’s unique, unforgettable vision of America in the 1930s. And both Welty’s images and her words will be given a proper showcase in the March 16 performance piece that shares the exhibit’s title, in which Augustana College Professor Ann Boaden delivers what is described as a “quasi-dramatic monologue” of “verbal photographs,” with piano accompaniment. Sounds Welty-rific! (Sorry, folks. One last nod to the *Simpsons*

fans there.) For more information, visit  
<http://www.figgeartmuseum.org>

– Mike Schulz

### **MUSICALS**

**March through May**

Springtime has long been the inspiration for some of the most lovely, enduring, and, above all, romantic songs in American musicals. Who could forget *South Pacific*’s “Younger Than Springtime”? Or “Spring, Spring, Spring” from

*Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*

? Or that immortal

*Producers*

ballad, “Springtime for Hitl – .” Okay, so not  
*all*

of them are romantic. But if spring makes you, too, feel like singing, you’ll have plenty of company at three of the area’s theatrical venues. The beloved creations of Charles Schulz (

*great*

name) come alive in the Quad City Music Guild's presentation of

*You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*

March 31 through April 2. The Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse not only brings audiences the long-awaited Andrew Lloyd Webber smash

*Cats*

from March 29 through June 17, but a debuting family musical comedy entitled

*Aesop's Dynamic Duo*

, running April 24 through May 13. And the Playcrafters Barn Theatre will house

*Sweet & Hot: The Songs of Harold Arlen*

from May 12 through 21, at which the theatre's guests will be treated to performances of such classics as "Get Happy," "Over the Rainbow," and "Stormy Weather." Sounds like spring to

*me*

– **Mike Schulz**

### **THE DAVID R. COLLINS LITERARY AWARDS BANQUET**

**The Outing Club**

**Saturday, March 11, 6 p.m.**

The David R. Collins Literary Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, March 11, at the Davenport Outing Club, hosted by the Midwest Writing Center as part of the organization's 25th anniversary. Beverly Van Hook, author of the popular "Supergranny" series of children's books, will be the special guest speaker. Winner of the Cornelia Meigs Award for Children's Literature, and the Isabel Bloom Award for the Arts from the Quad-Cities Women's Coalition, Van Hook spent the first 22 years of her career as a newspaper journalist before writing *The Mystery of the Shrunken Heads*

, the first of seven books in the "Supergranny" series. For several years, Van Hook was unable to get a publisher for the book, even though an editor at Little, Brown said it featured "hilarious characters" and was a "good idea for a series"; Van Hook and several friends went on to publish the work themselves - through their publishing company, Holderby & Bierce - and the rest is literary history. The banquet will begin at 6 p.m. with a silent auction and book sale; dinner will be served at 7 p.m.; and more information on the evening is available by calling (563)324-1410.

– **Jesse Virgil**