The Temptations

The Adler Theatre

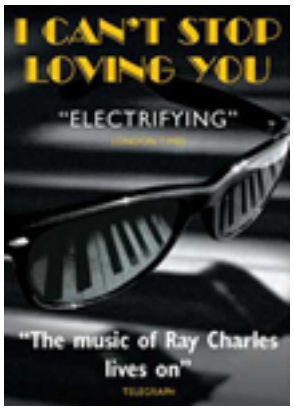
Thursday, December 7, 7:30 p.m.

There was a time when the word "soul" was not followed by "patrol." Last season's *American Idol* winner, Taylor Hicks, convinced the country that he embodied soul music, but I'm as convinced that he was conceived when Jay Leno and George Clooney spit into the same petri dish; how much soul can he really possess? The Quad Cities is about to get a dose of *real* soul music with the arrival of Motown legends The Temptations, coming to Davenport's Adler Theatre on Thursday, December 7. While the group has gone through numerous lineups, Otis Williams - the only original Temptation still living - will lead the reassembled act for a special, Motown-style holiday performance. Since forming in Detroit in the early '60s, The Temptations have sold more than 22 million albums worldwide. The five-piece ensemble is believed to be as influential to soul as the Beatles were to rock, and their music has covered a wide range of styles, from doo-wop, R&B, and soul to funk, disco, and psychedelia. And with hits that include "My Girl," "Ball of Confusion," and "Papa Was a Rollin' Stone," the group has been covered by everyone from Bette Midler and the Rolling Stones to Duran Duran and Anthrax. For more information, visit (http://www.adlertheatre.com).

- Brad Vidmar

Musicals

November through February



Winter's the perfect season for a little escape, but if you can't find time for a vacation, an area musical is bound to feature a destination spot to your liking. Looking for someplace magical? The Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse takes your family to the North Pole in *The Elves & the Shoemaker* (opening November 22); St. Ambrose University brings audiences to the fantastical world of *Narnia* (December 2 and 3); and on January 4, Davenport's Adler Theatre turns into an outsize junkyard for *Cats*. (And right after the theatre's renovation, too.) Seeking a more recognizable locale? The Adler also gives audiences a tour of the south - or, at the very least, southern California - in the Ray Charles musical *I Can't Stop Loving You* (December 13); Quad City Music Guild makes Bedford Falls come alive in *It's a Wonderful Life: The Musical* (opening November 30); and Circa '21 drops you in the mean streets of New York City (in all

their song-and-dance splendor!) in
West Side Story
(January 17). And in Iowa City, you can enjoy the Riverside Theatre's
Guys on Ice: An Ice-Fishing Musical Comedy
(January 26). Granted, a frozen lake may not be as
glamorous
as those other locales, but I wanna see Sondheim and Webber come up with a title that funny.
- Mike Schulz

Comedies and Dramas

December through February

Dreamyard A Theatre of Exploration

On the surface, the area's winter plays might appear grim, but in truth, they'll probably be loads of fun. Next month, the New Ground Theatre premieres *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* (openi ng December 7), and while Marley does end up, y'know,
dead

, the
Chicago Tribute
calls the show "an audience-pleaser filled with laughs." The Playcrafters Barn Theatre presents the thriller
Strangers on a Train
(January 12), but as Hitchcock's movie proved, it's a really
enjoyable
thriller; and despite its murderous plotline, the Richmond Hill Barn Theatre's
Arsenic & Old Lace
(February 15) should also amuse, as it's a pair of sweet, elderly ladies doing the murdering. St. Ambrose University's
Fortinbras
(February 16) is about
Hamlet
, which isn't funny, but is also a
Hamlet
s
atire
, which
is
. Speaking of Shakespeare, the Prenzie Players continue their
Henriad
trilogy with
King Henry the Fourth
on February 23; anyone
not
expecting grand entertainment obviously didn't see Prenzie's
King Richard the Second
. And finally there's Augustana College's capital-punishment drama
Dead Man Walking
(February 2), which may
seem
like a downer, but which actually ... uh ... hmm ... . Damn it, Augie! Can't you help me out here? I gave you all that tuition money!
- Mike Schulz

Quad City Arts Visiting Artists

December through February

The upcoming performers in the Quad City Arts Visiting Artist series are a pretty diverse lot. Chicago's First Folio Shakespeare Company performs at the Galvin Fine Arts Center on December 8; the troupe, known for unique takes on the Bard, will present *The 50-Minute Romeo & Juliet* with *The 50-Minute Midsummer Night's Dream*. Actor Tom Dugan brings his one-man show to Davenport's Capitol Theatre on January 27; Dugan portrays Robert E. Lee in the days before his historic meeting with General Grant. And on February 17, native Bulgarian Bella Hristova will demonstrate her expert violin skills at Rock Island's Redeemer Lutheran Church. These artists may appear to have nothing in common, but in actuality, they're rather easily connected. Hristova once performed on the *Prairie Home Companion* radio show with Garrison Keillor, who appeared in the *Companion* movie with Kevin Kline, who starred in 1999's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Calista Flockhart, who once guested on TV's *The Practice* ... as did Tom Dugan. A mere four degrees of separation. (And for the record, Dugan was in *The Puppet Masters* with Donald Sutherland, who was in *JFK* with Kevin Bacon.) For more information, visit (http://www.quadcityarts.com).

- Mike Schulz

The Nutcracker

The Adler Theatre

Saturday, November 25, and Sunday, November 26

If you read my movie columns on a regular basis, you may notice that there's no review of the new James Bond film, *Casino Royale*, in this week's issue. You may also have noticed that a *number* of recent releases - *Happy Feet, The Return, Let's Go to Prison, Harsh Times* - haven't been reviewed yet. I apologize; I've been pretty busy recently. In other news, it's time again for Ballet Quad Cities' annual production of *The Nutcracker*, being performed at Davenport's Adler Theatre November 25 and 26. Boasting that unforgettable Tchaikovsky score and the spectacular talents of the only professional ballet company between Omaha, Nebraska, and Chicago, this classic tale has, for families everywhere, become a holiday tradition. But expect a few different elements this time around. This year's *Nutcracker* features new choreography by Ballet Quad Cities' interim artistic director Matthew Keefe, and word has it the organization had such trouble finding a Drosselmeyer that they hired some

freakin'
journalist
for the part - although, apparently, this "actor" has been working so hard on the role that he hasn't had much time to go to the movies. For tickets, call (563) 326-1111 or visit (http://www.balletquadcities.com).
- Mike Schulz

Hancher Auditorium Performances

December through February

Are the dropping temperatures and gray weather getting you down? Take a trip to the University of Iowa's Hancher Auditorium, where springtime is right around the corner! Of course, it's springtime for *Hitler*, so that's not exactly the *greatest* thing ... . In any event, the Iowa City venue's winter schedule includes the touring production of Mel Brooks'
The Producers
(February 6 through 8), the most-awarded musical in the history of the Tonys (and one of the funniest, to boot). Also on Hancher's lineup for December through February: jazz man extraordinaire Paquito D'Rivera (December 1); Grammy-winning singer Dianne Reeves in her "Christmas Time Is Here" tour (December 8); "Fiesta Navidad" with Mexican ensemble Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano (December 10); the splendid sounds of the Hamburg Symphony

(January 21); clarinetist Richard Stoltzman's "Salute to Benny Goodman" (February 24); and modern-dance sensations Momix with their
Lunar Sea
(February 27). Plus, Hancher presents the Aquila Theatre Company's production of
Romeo & Juliet
. On Valentine's Day. Uh ... they know how that play
ends
, right ... ? For more information on Hancher's 2006-7 season, visit (
http://www.hancher.uiowa.edu
).
- Mike Schulz

Mike Epps

Penguin's Comedy Club

Friday, November 24, through Sunday, November 26

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