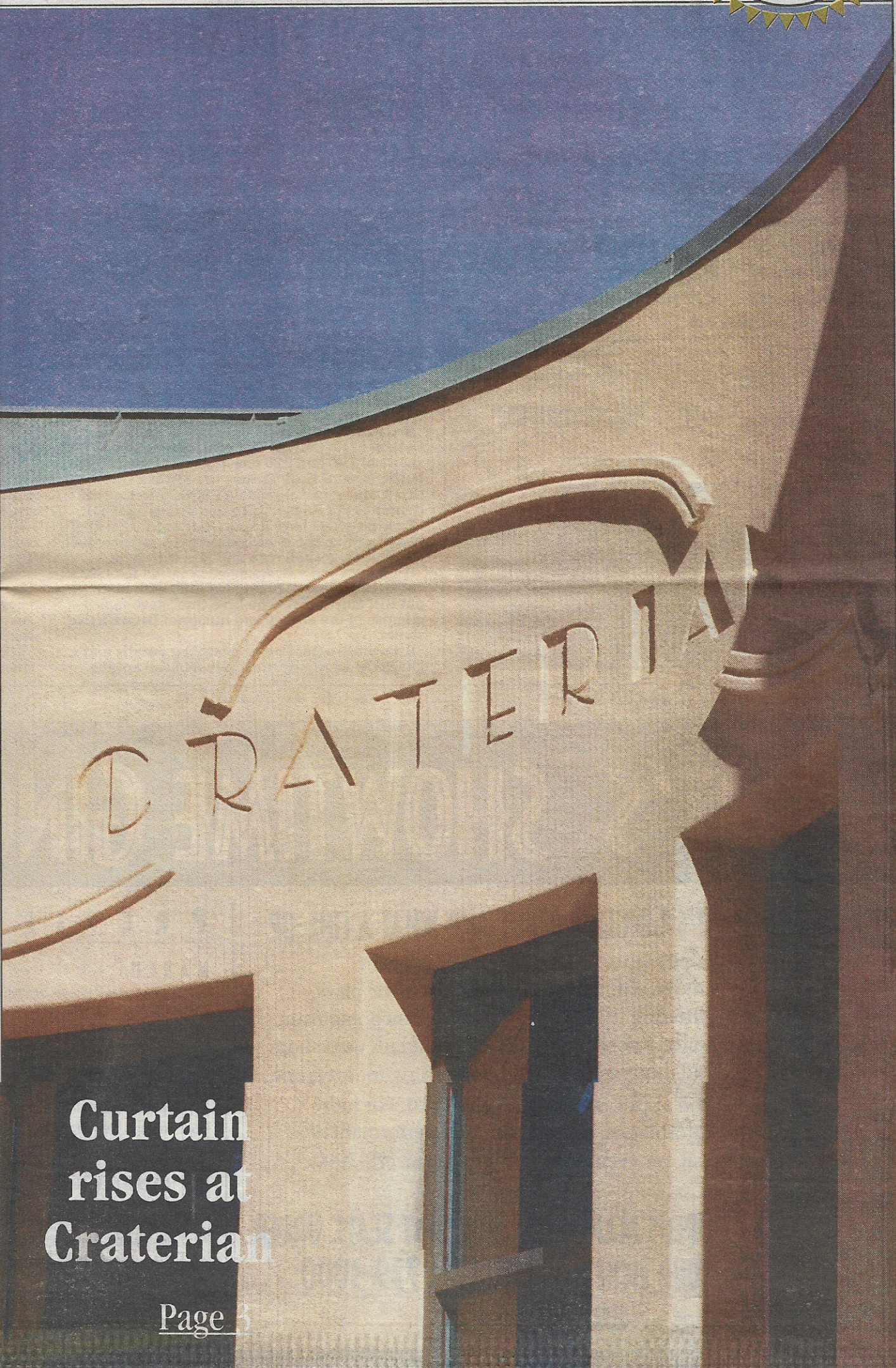


Mail Tribune

Friday, February 28, 1997



**Curtain
rises at
Craterian**

Page 3



Mail Tribune / Bob Pennell

Retired music teacher Carroll Graber of Medford, left, and Keith Campbell of Ashland practice with the Rogue Valley Chorale.

BACH to the FUTURE

Christian 'passion' music stems from medieval plays

By **AL REISS**
of the Mail Tribune

The Rogue Valley Chorale raises the curtain on the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater Saturday and Sunday with the music of J.S. Bach.

The work is "The Passion According to St. John," to be presented Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. To reserve tickets, call 779-3000. Tickets cost \$10.

According to conductor Lynn Sjolund, about 85 voices will be in the chorale, with music by a chamber orchestra of 17. "We'll have about 100," he says.

Sjolund, the founding director of the chorale, will conduct the orchestra and chorus for the performances. The concertmaster is Nancie Linn Shaw.

Soloists will be soprano Susan Olson; mezzo-soprano Janet Steen Campbell; James Brown, tenor; Clayton Brainerd, bass, and Craig Kingsbury, bass. Brainerd sings the role of Pontius Pilate. Kingsbury sings the part of Jesus and Brown sings the part of the Evangelist.

ON THE SCENE

What: Johann Sebastian Bach's "Passion According to St. John," performed by the Rogue Valley Chorale.

When: Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 3 p.m.

Where: Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater.

Tickets: \$10 per person, call 779-3000 for reservations.

According to Sjolund, Kingsbury, now a resident of Portland, has sung the role of Jesus with the Portland Baroque Orchestra and Chorus in their production of the "St. John Passion."

Olson, well known to audiences in southern Oregon, has been a regular member of the chorale, and sang on its tour of Hungary. She has sung many roles for the Rogue Opera.

Brown also has sung with the Rogue Opera. He is a member of the graduate program at the Juilliard School of Music in New York. He was scheduled to sing the arias in the "St. Matthew Passion" in New York.

Brainerd has sung at Carnegie Hall in
see **MUSIC**, Page 8

Chorale opens Craterian with 'St. John Passion'

By **BILL VARBLE**
of the Mail Tribune

The new \$5.2 million Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater in downtown Medford debuts as a performing arts center Saturday night.

The Rogue Valley Chorale inaugurates the dazzling new Craterian with Johann Sebastian Bach's "The Passion According to St. John."

The performance will mark two firsts for the Rogue Valley. Not only is it the new Crater's debut, it is as far as anybody knows the first public performance of Bach's great work in the Rogue Valley. Chorale director Lynn Sjolund says that's because the Lenten drama of the crucifixion of Christ requires an outstanding array of soloists, choir and chamber orchestra, and it's seldom performed outside big cities.

In fact, the show will include soloists from New York, San Francisco and Portland, Sjolund says. The program repeats Sunday.

see **OPENS**, Page 8

Opens

from Page 3

Craterian Executive Director Stephen McCandless says that only minor details of the yearlong refurbishing of the theater remain unfinished. Those include some minor finish work, exterior lights and some painting and flooring in non-public areas. However, the chorale was forced to scrub a Tuesday night rehearsal because the structure hadn't yet passed fire inspection.

The next phase of the renovation includes seven more women's restrooms, a rehearsal studio, a meeting area and offices.

But the Crate's focus has essentially shifted from the first phase of its mission — creating a state-of-the-art theater — to the post-bricks and mortar phase: encouraging productions by local arts

groups and presenting entertainment that's affordable.

The next two months — they're calling it The Preview Showcase — will see plenty of Oregon-based groups, most of them from the Rogue Valley. In addition, McCandless says the Craterian Performance Company, which will present entertainment in the new theater, has handshake agreements for a dozen touring shows for the 1997-98 season (see list on Page 3).

Coming later are shows being presented by the Craterian Performances Company. McCandless says he has tentative deals on a number of these, but details remain to be worked out.

Planned theater shows include "Fresh Numbers" by The Acting Company, and Henrik Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" with the National

Theater of the Deaf.

Dance performances will include "Billy the Kid" with the Oakland Ballet, and Joe Goode's unique mix of theater and dance.

Broadway shows in the wings are "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," "West Side Story" and "Chorus Line."

Children's programs coming this way are the Missoula Children's Theater's "Johnny Appleseed" and Bonnie Phipps and the Elastic Band's "A Music and Language Program."

Musical acts in the offing are jazz singer Kitty Margolis, bluegrass musician Judith Edelman, and Irish Fire, a celebration of Irish music and dance.

Opera fans can look forward to the San Francisco Opera's touring production of Bizet's "Carmen."