

Problems hit the critical stage at two area theaters

That scuffling noise you hear is the sound of two theaters shifting closer to the edge of their seats.

Oakland University's Meadow Brook Theatre and the Nederlander-owned Birmingham Theatre both are foot-dragging on urgent matters. Their staffs are tense, their patrons nervous.

And their anxieties are likely to rub off on Detroit's always skittish theater community.

At Meadow Brook, a four-month search has failed to produce a new artistic director to succeed outward-bound Terence Kilburn. Not one of the 94 applicants was deemed up to snuff by a search committee that pored



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over resumes, tantalized reporters with plans to name a list of semi-finalists, then said two weeks ago that it was going to begin the process all over.

Bill Clinton picked three attorneys general in the time it's taking Meadow Brook to find a new boss.

To be fair, there's a plausible excuse behind the committee's delay. Meadow Brook Managing Director Gregg Bloomfield concedes that under Kilburn's tenure, Meadow Brook didn't have "a lot of visibility" nationally. So it hasn't attracted the mobs of hungry, gifted job seekers that an institution with its resources rightfully should.

At the Birmingham, speculation is flying that owner Harry Nederlander will close up shop when the theater's lease comes due for renewal in July. After 17 years of up-and-down seasons and disappointing returns, building owner Edward "Ted" Fuller says he doesn't think that he and the Nederlander organization should "subsidize" the Birmingham any longer.

"I think a lot of people would like to see the theater stay," Fuller says. "Unfortunately, it just doesn't get the attendance it needs."

At this point, the only person who can say what will happen and when is Harry Nederlander, who has mulled over options with Fuller. He tends to grumble about rumors but has said nothing publicly to silence the gossip.

In the meantime, Birmingham manager Charlotte Lally has called a meeting today to lay her staff's fears that they'll soon be handed pink slips.

"I think Mr. Nederlander is still real conflicted about whether to do it (close the theater)," says Lally.

What's depressing is that earlier this year, both theaters appeared to be on the threshold of bold, decisive change.

Meadow Brook at last seemed ready to sweep away a quarter-century of indifferent Agatha Christie whodunits and shop around for an innovator.

Interestingly, two of our most resourceful local directors, the University of Detroit Theatre Co.'s David Regal, and Hilberry/Attic alum Gordon Reinhart, applied for the job and reportedly were told thanks but no thanks.

For the past three seasons, New York City-based director Worth Gardner has been slowly helping the Birmingham rebuild its audience with his brilliant productions of *The Wizard of Oz*, *Oklahoma!* and *The NOT Mikado*. The theater was so pleased with Gardner's work they'd offered to let him program an entire season.

Now that offer is on hold, and the theater's upcoming season — if it exists — will be pushed back two weeks. Meadow Brook already has announced its next season and has set a new hiring deadline of July 1.

Yet even if both theaters shake off their latest psychodramas, they've given their audiences no reason to assume there won't be fresh ones ahead.

A newsletter asked its readers to share their dreams of the first lady, and the results ranged from A to Zzzz

I dream of Hillary

By David Jacobson
THE DETROIT NEWS

"I was walking with Hillary somewhere and she seemed sad and leaned her head against my upper body and I think I hugged her in an affectionate way."

— A dream account submitted by a 39-year-old single man to the Hillary Clinton Quarterly

Somehow, as the editor and publisher of the Hillary Clinton Quarterly, Frank Marafiotte has never found himself dreaming about the first lady.

"I spend so much time reading and writing about her I don't have any unconscious thoughts being repressed," Marafiotte theorizes.

But for the past six months, his quarterly has been collecting accounts of other people's Hillary dreams, following on the heels of fantasy collections about Woody Allen, Madonna and Bill Clinton. (The last is just out. See story on this page.)

"We no longer have those great mythic figures of the past to feed our unconscious," Marafiotte says of the new mini-industry in dream trolling. "In-

stead we have celebrities like Hillary."

Not surprisingly, the nap-time notions gathered about Hillary so far vary widely. After all, the omnipresent president's wife is a provocative mix: a female authority figure who tugs both the reins of power and a few heartstrings. A role model who has come under scrutiny and attack. A political lightning rod.

"In some ways you can see Hillary as a big old movie screen on which we're all projecting our unconscious fantasies."

Kelly Bulkeley, Dream Researcher

"Bill is so accessible, he tells us what kind of underwear he's wearing," Marafiotte says. "Hillary is more of a mystery." That allows folks greater latitude in la-la land.

Thus you have the sympathetic dreamers. Like the woman who dreamed of Hillary at her father's deathbed earlier this year: "Just remember," the late Rodham advises Hillary of the role she and the president must play. "You can't both be silly at the same time."

And you have the dreamers straining for intimacy. Like the woman who dreamed of

Please see Hillary, 8C

Bill Clinton is a popular candidate of dreamers



By David Jacobson
THE DETROIT NEWS

The day after President Clinton's inauguration, Chicago art director Julia Anderson-Miller dreamed that she was worn out from working at her MacIntosh when "out of the blue, Bill Clinton walked through the door and rubbed my neck therapeutically."

"When I woke up my neck felt better and I wondered if other people had dreamed of Bill Clinton," she writes in the foreword to *Dreams of Bill* (Citadel Press, 217 pages, \$8.95), co-edited with her husband Bruce — who himself dreamed that Bill helped him clean out the messy backseat of his car.

By placing classified ads in newspapers across America, the Millers discovered that lots of other people were dreaming about Bill (they received 300 dream accounts; 250 made the book).

"I think he's more accessible, even cosmically or subconsciously," says Anderson-Miller.

The book editors also found that Clinton generally comes off well in dreams — as the sort of intimate, helpful fellow they dream of — even among those who probably don't care for the president when they're awake. (About 40 percent of submissions came from Republicans.)

Whatever the opinion

Please see Bill, 8C



City Councilman Gil Hill is back to acting in "Beverly Hills Cop III."

In his next life, Gil Hill would opt for Hollywood

By Susan Stark
NEWS FILM CRITIC

Detroit homicide detective turned councilman Gil Hill celebrates his 10th anniversary as a movie actor this year. With a rueful laugh, he says that in his next life, he'd be happy to confine himself strictly to his part-time job.

"I'll be honest with you. If I had received a break like that in my 20s or 30s, I'd have been gone. No question about it, I'd have been gone."

Hill's third film role is the same as his first and second. He plays boss to Eddie Murphy's maverick cop in *Beverly Hills Cop III*, which has its world premiere Monday at downtown's Fox Theatre before

opening nationally next Wednesday.

"Acting certainly has its rewards, and not just monetary," says Hill. "It's your ego, your esteem. It's just fabulous."

"The only thing I'd have worried about is to be sure I had the will to learn the craft. Actors work hard. It's a tremendously difficult profession."

"But if you become proficient and you have a little star quality about you, then you can live like a king."

Tall, dark, handsome, reed-slim Hill may feel he got his start in showbiz too late to make a career of it, but even at 50-something, he

Please see Gil Hill, 4C

inside!

parental guidance
pg weekend

■ **Kiddie lit:** Tales of golden tresses, a mischievous young gorilla and a bothersome brother provide some comic relief for young readers. **3C**



Hillary: Readers share dreams of first lady

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hanging out with Hillary in a public swimming pool: "I tell her I think she's doing a terrific job, and then I kinda run out of things to say. So, I start talking about the Bills' chances in the next Super Bowl. I tell her I'm from Buffalo and by law I have to root for them. She doesn't laugh at my poor joke but, like an idiot, I keep talking. . . ."

You have a self-described political opponent, who dreams of Hillary at a ball: "In her hand was a huge goblet. . . . As she floated toward the balcony where I sat, I was able to see what was in the goblet: hundreds of tiny babies covered in blood."

According to some schools of modern psychology, mixed emotions — such as those Hillary inspires — are the stuff that dreams are made of.

"Dreams allow us an opportunity to re-examine whatever the unresolved emotional issues are in our life and to be able to see them from a potentially fresh perspective," says Robert Van de Castle, a professor emeritus in the psychiatry department of the University of Virginia and the author of a new 600-page treatise, *Our Dreaming Mind*.

Then, too, it's been said that dreams tell us more about dreamers than their subjects.

"In some ways you can see Hillary as a big old movie screen on which we're all projecting our unconscious fantasies," says Kelly Bulkeley, a veteran dream researcher and a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley.

But Bulkeley, who analyzed the dreams people had around the time of the 1992 presidential election, knows that our brain's nightly spin cycle handles more than personal laundry.

"Our unconscious is involved not just with the immediate things of our personal experience but with the broader world as well, commenting on it, grappling with it. Dreams have two different dimensions," he says.

Nocturnal submissions

To consider the many dimensions of some DOHs (Dreams of Hillary) we asked Marafioti, Van de Castle and Bulkeley to comment on a few of the quarterly's nocturnal submissions. All agreed to give it a shot, while conceding that it's hard to accurately interpret a dream without knowing more about the dreamer.

A woman writes: "Hillary Clinton had come to visit me in Williamstown, Mass., my hometown. We were going on a walk up Stone Hill to find a place where Hillary might take off all her clothes and dance with abandon, out of view of the press or other prying eyes. She had stripped down and was very excited and eager about the prospect. In the field. . . we came to the edge of a crater about 15 feet in diameter and thought that it might be the perfect place, but Hillary peered over the edge and pronounced it no good because there were already several couples there, their legs intertwined. I couldn't see them well, but I did notice some snakes in the crater and knew I didn't want to go in there. So we headed back to my parents' house. Hillary was very disappointed."

Marafioti: "It's a desire to obtain some sort of approval," from Hillary, the powerful and harassed authority figure. "However, the dreamer fails in the end. She goes back to her parents' house, which also represents authority."

Bulkeley: "Often snakes are images of ambivalent power. Power which is both alluring and desirable but which is also frightening and potentially dangerous."

"In this perfect place the woman sees what Hillary encounters when she takes it too far. The dreamer says, 'I knew I didn't want to go in there.' Maybe seeing what's happening to Hillary in terms of the beating she's taking now."

Van de Castle: "That one almost sounds made up. I can't guarantee it was, but if you go by Freudian symbols, the crater certainly has vaginal aspects and the snakes are phallic symbols. It's almost like some psy-

chology student who had (studied) a little bit of dream stuff thought she'd pull somebody's leg."

A male paramedic submitted a three-page dream account: He was helicoptered into New York's Adirondack Mountains during a bad snowstorm to rescue Hillary and some others whose plane had crashed in an area only accessible by foot.

"The next thing I remember I was in that remote area and had found the crash site. I climbed in and found all alive but very cold and weak. . . . I remember helping Hillary put on hunting pants and jacket over her ski outfit. She asked if I thought we could make it. I said yes. Then we were walking on some trail toward a cabin I knew was there. Hillary was weak and cold and I was half carrying her.

"I could see the face of Hillary so clear; she looked worried and scared. I kept talking to her to reassure her everything would be alright. She seemed to trust me. When I woke up I felt as if I had just left her."

Marafioti: "It's possible to view this guy as somewhat homophobic" — afraid that he is gay, too. "One way for him to compensate is to take a very extreme masculine role vis-a-vis a very powerful woman. It's almost a farcical stereotype of the super-macho guy."

Bulkeley: "To read it in the political sense, it's one way of looking at Hillary's current political situation. She has crashed. She's in danger. She needs to be saved. If someone doesn't save her she will die."

Down in the gutter

A woman writes: "I was climbing up a mountain. My boss from my first job after college was at the top. She told me that I had done everything wrong. I felt bad. I looked down to a street at the bottom of the mountain. Water flowed along the gutter. Hillary was sitting in the water. I thought that if Hillary was in the gutter, then it was OK if I was there."

Bulkeley: "To climb a mountain is sort of the classic, archetypal image of the great journey, the great quest, seeking the good, seeking the sacred. The implication here is that Hillary has failed in that and has (fallen) down to the bottom, down in the gutter."

"The dream draws on water's meaning as source of life. It's the place where. . . one is baptized. The dead in India are laid in the Ganges River, as part of the transformation process to the next existence."

"In this case it kind of reassures the dreamer: 'Even though I failed in that attempt to go up the mountain, now I'm down here in the water with Hillary and maybe Hillary has some power of regeneration. She's been down before and she has the regenerative, renewing power to get back up and climb the mountain again.'"

A man writes: "Hillary is the Delphic Oracle. There's a long line of people waiting outside her cell at the Delphic Temple to consult her. Bill is the impresario, welcoming people and, when their turn comes, introducing them to Hillary."

"The dream widens out into a large amphitheater, where Hillary's on stage and all the supplicants are seated around her, hanging on her every word. . . the sick and lame file onto the stage."

"As she moves toward them, lightning strikes the stage and obliterates it. When the smoke and dust clear, we see Hillary back in her cell at the temple. She's praying. The crowds are gone. She's alone, except for a small child who is crying, 'I'm hungry.'"

Marafioti: "This dream is about Hillary, and to some degree Bill, not really being who they say they are. Hillary pretends to have all the answers. It's kind of a *Wizard of Oz* scenario."

Bulkeley: "Hillary is being struck down from above (by) a kind of phallic lightning bolt."

"Like a lot of the other dreams, this is seeing Hillary as someone who is striving for the heights — striving to reach her ideals and having difficulties if not failing completely. The dreamer seems to think it's sort of righteously appropriate that she fail."

As for the crying kid, Marafioti says: "The child can represent a lot of things, her concern for kids, Chelsea, health care. It could represent her own inner child."

■ Dreams © 1994, the Hillary Clinton Quarterly.

Bill: He gets sleepers' nod

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poll or electoral numbers, Bruce Miller asserts, "I think there's a lot of people who like Bill Clinton, they may be today's Silent Majority."

Or perhaps they're a lightly snoring majority.

Certainly, the 16 Michigan dreamers included in the book reflect the Millers' thesis, some dreamed of thrilling living room visits, some of sexy touches or sweet kisses, some of saving an endangered Bill from jogging heart attacks or amateur haircuts.

Other locally spawned dreams in the book include one from Nan McCulloch, 41, of Ferndale:

"I dreamt that Clinton was a traveling salesman named Roy Butler. He was a typical fifties-style rural huckster, with a porkpie hat and plaid jacket. . . . He was selling lightbulbs. These were revolutionary lightbulbs — not only energy efficient but something about the light they cast was specially illuminating. . . .

"These new-fangled, space-age lightbulbs were a boon to mankind in some metaphysical way. So even though Butler/Clinton was a 'slick' dude, there was something endearing and innocent about the product he was touting. . . . and he sincerely believed in it."

Another passage comes from Gretchen Linenger, 27, of Troy:

"I dreamed that President Clinton was in Detroit for a convention or something and he was staying at a hotel on the river. I really wanted to see him, and so did another girl I used to work with. . . . It was like a competition to see who could get there first. . . .

"The hotel room he was staying in was high up, and there were guards all around the building. . . . I got up on the windowsill by swinging from a rope on another building. When I got there, he was already on his way downstairs, where the other girl was waiting. He was. . . wearing his pajama bottoms (no shirt), carrying the newspaper and a cup of coffee. I ran up to him and hugged him. . . .

"I started to kiss him. . . then unfortunately (or fortunately maybe from another's point of view), I woke up."

Dolores Flores, 39, of Dearborn, submitted this dream:

"Myself and a few of my friends (all women) were in the dining room of my home. I looked out the window and I saw a tornado a few feet from the window. I yelled to everyone, 'It's a tornado! Take cover,' which they did, underneath the dining room table. I did not, as I was watching the tornado approach the house.

"My friends began calling to me to take cover, when President Clinton said, 'Dolores, please come underneath the table,' and he extended his hand to me.

"I did not want to take it, but he was insistent and finally I did. Just then the windows were shattered, and the President threw himself over me and my friends to protect us from the tornado."

■ The Millers will be at the Little Professor Book Company in Ann Arbor from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday to sign books and do some "Clinton dream sharing."