

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 1-7, 2007 A GUIDE TO THE GREATER FORT MYERS ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT SCENE

Excitement in the air



Michael Hall and the Southwest Florida Symphony start a new era

▬▬▬▬▬ If you go

>>What: Southwest Florida Symphony
>>When: 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 3 and 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 4
>>Where: The Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall, 8099 College Parkway, Fort Myers
 Cost: \$19 - \$55
>>Information: Call 418-1500 or go to www.swfso.org. There will be a special champagne salute to new music director Michael Hall in the Mann Hall's Judd Pavilion from 5:30-7:30 p.m., cost: \$30
>>Program: Schubert: Rosamunde Overture; Schubert: 3 Lieder: Die Forella (arr. Britten), Geheimes (arr. Brahms), Erikonig (arr. Berlioz); Beethoven: Symphony #9 in D Minor (choral)

WEEK at-a-glance



What it takes to succeed

Chef Dale Tonell makes Courtney's in Fort Myers a culinary hit. **C19** ▶



Stones a hit at Florida Rep

"'Stones in His Pockets' is a triumph, an exhilarating, not-to-be-missed night at the theater." — Florida Weekly theater reviewer Nancy Stetson. **C8** ▶

BY NANCY STETSON
Florida Weekly Correspondent

Michael Hall is excited. He's excited about Beethoven, Schubert and Mozart the way preteens are excited about "American Idol" and Hannah Montana.

And he's especially excited about taking the podium for the first time this weekend as the new Music Director and Conductor of the Southwest Florida Symphony.

"Excited" is a word that comes up over and over again when he talks about his new role and about working with the symphony, which is Lee County's only resident musical organization.

"I'm nervous, I'm excited, I'm filled with anticipation," Hall says. "Mostly I feel excited. I feel a lot of anticipation to work again with this

■ **Inside:** Where else is the Southwest Florida Symphony playing around town? **C4**



SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

The Southwest Florida Symphony's new season kicks off this weekend at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall.



The male mind

Dating columnist Artis Henderson tries to understand what men what. **C2** ▶

SEE SYMPHONY, C4 ▶

A Phantastic fundraiser

Downtown gala this Saturday

BY EVAN WILLIAMS
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Beautiful, young Opera singers named Christine, beware.

The tortured, deformed musical genius "Erik," of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Phantom of the Opera" is coming to terrorize (and help raise money for) the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in downtown Fort Myers, on Saturday, Nov. 3.

It's called "The Phantom of the Art Center Gala," the third yearly fundraiser the Art Center has held, director and Juilliard graduate Jim Griffith said. The

gala's goal is to help raise the last \$1.6 million, of the \$4.6 million deemed necessary to transform the old Federal Courthouse (and before that, the Post Office) on First Street into a mecca for local and international gallery shows, musical and theatre performances from all over the world, and other arts programs.

"We've sold a tremendous amount of tickets," Griffith said. "We're very pleased by the support."

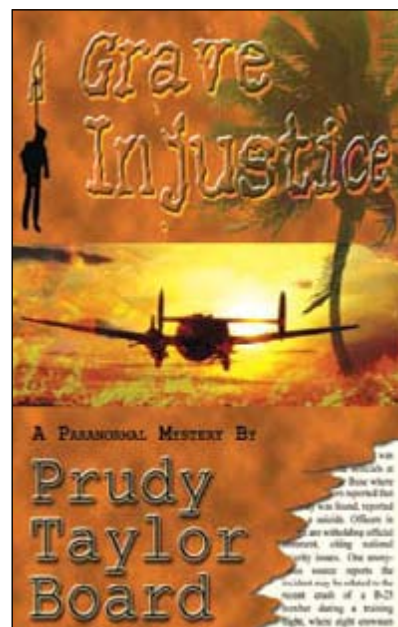
Tickets are available online at phantom2007.com or call the arts center at 239-337-1933. Tickets are \$100 for arts center members or \$125 for the public or future members. Adult memberships to

the Art Center are \$50 per person, and \$25 dollars for students. Tickets will also be for sale on the night of the event, at the entrance to the gala on First Street.

"If there are any left," Michele Patrick, director of marketing, said. "But I think there are still plenty of tickets available."

The evening begins at 6 p.m., with an official grand opening ceremony, and unveiling of the building's new artistic identity. At 6:30, the "phantom" will invite guests inside, where food and drink will be provided by downtown restaurants and nightclubs, including Harold's

SEE PHANTOM, C14 ▶



Paranormal mystery

The latest novel by former Fort Myers resident Prudy Taylor Board. **C5** ▶