

Group branches out into musical theatre

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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In a warmonger-run village, one girl has the audacity to speak out — through song.

The courage to do something against the grain is a theme behind the scenes as well as for this original folk musical, *Selah's Song*.

Theatre of the Beat's Johnny Wideman is the play's writer and the four-person troupe are the producers. This is the first time the local group has ventured into original musical theatre.

Same goes for songwriter Bryan Moyer Suderman.

The local musician has contributed a song or two to various productions, but has never written an entire musical score.

"It's not just here are some slots, here, fill them," the 44-year-old singer/songwriter said.

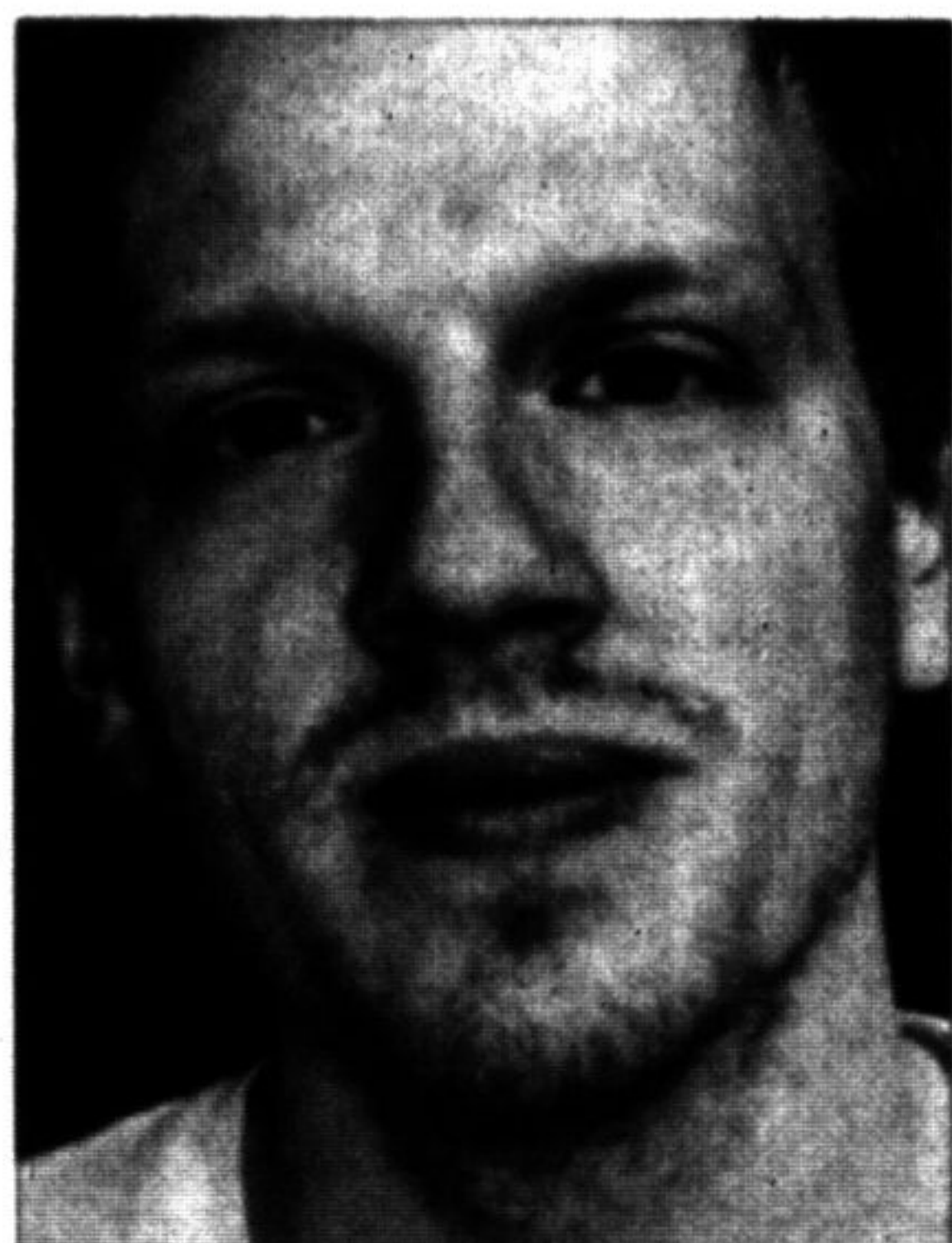
Since June, Mr. Wideman and Mr. Moyer Suderman have been collaborating on the social justice musical, with each writer inspiring the other.

"A songwriter always wonders if a song has impact," Mr. Moyer Suderman said.

This is the first time Mr. Moyer Suderman and Theatre of the Beat have partnered on a project. But it is not the first time the troupe has inspired the musician.

The four-member group and Mr. Moyer Suderman were at the same retreat this past February. From that experience, and specifically Mr. Suderman's dealings with the actors, came a song.

For the past two years, Theatre of the Beat has toured its four-person original productions across Canada with



JOHNNY WIDEMAN: Playwright's Stouffville group taking first shot at musical theatre.

occasional one-night showcases in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Selah's Song is the first time the cast will go beyond its nucleus. It will also not be a travelling show. It will be staged at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park in January.

Auditions take place for actors and singers eight years of age and older, Sept. 12 and 13, 7 to 9 p.m. at Nineteen on the Park.

About 20 people will be cast.

Rebecca Steiner, the group's director, hopes this production will inspire local youth the way the York Durham Academy of Performing Arts inspired her.

For more information, go to <http://selahssong.wordpress.com/auditions/>



Stouffville's Bryan Moyer Suderman had written a song or two for productions, but never an entire musical score. Auditions for the production open next week.

Clash between history, development before panel

A panel discussion in support of Peter Sibbald's exhibition — *Elegy for a Stolen Land* — takes place tonight from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Latcham Gallery in Stouffville.

The discussion will explore the strategies and problems that arise when development encounters historical artifacts.

Along with Mr. Sibbald, an award-winning photojournalist and artist, the panel will include Ronald Williamson, who was the head archeologist for the Mantle dig. Those discoveries were chronicled in the documentary *Curse of the Axe*.

Suzanne Howes of the Chipewas of Georgina Island First Nation will also be in attendance. An opening ceremony will be conducted by Jacob Charles, a spiritual guide and knowledge keeper.

For more information, go to www.latchamgallery.ca

Heirloom tips offered

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is hosting a Caring For Your Treasures workshop Sept. 13 from 10 a.m. to noon.

The hands-on session will teach participants how to handle, care for and preserve heirlooms and photos. Attendees will also experience first-hand how to repair broken ceramics via conservation techniques and materials.

Cost is \$20 for non-members of the museum and \$16 for members. For more information, go to www.townofws.ca/museum.asp

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