

Act-ivities

John Oates of Hall & Oates has agreed to a request by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation to promote the importance of wearing safety belts

as part of a national safety belt campaign. Oates, who sometimes drives racing cars, will do radio spots around the country during the duo's

current nationwide tour. . . . Asia to do a national tour beginning late this month and encompassing 70 dates until November in support of "Alpha," its second Geffen Records release.

George Frayne, otherwise known as Commander Cody of the Lost

Planet Airmen, opened a one-man show of his acrylics at the Star Art Gallery in Hollywood June 30. Frayne's paintings—brightly colored graphics of trains and boats and planes (plus a few cars)—range in price from \$400 to \$3,500. . . . Melissa Manchester to play Radio City

Music Hall Aug. 4. Also expect Rush to do a week at the venue.

Bassist Annette Zilinskas has left the Bangles. Her replacement is Michael Steele, who was doing studio work, but dropped all other commitments to join the all-female Los Angeles band.

Island recording act U2 wanted to come see IRS' new Welsh band, the Alarm, at Club Lingerie in Hollywood, but they didn't all make it. Seems guitarist The Edge got so annoyed at being asked for ID at the door, he turned on his heel and left. (Edge is a legal 21, but just barely.)

Chris DeBurgh will be doing 20 shows with Supertramp in Europe. . . . Little River Band on a four-month tour of the U.S. . . . The Blasters are on tour with Eric Clapton.

Signings: Tom Waits to Island Records. . . . The Animals, featuring the original lineup, to IRS Records. Also to IRS: the November Group and Let's Active. . . . Dick Coulson & Letter O to Polydor. . . . Butch Patrick, formerly Eddie Munster on the tv show "The Munsters," to Rocshire Records. . . . Also to Rocshire: Graham Bonnet.

Big Twist & the Mellow Fellows to Alligator Records. . . . Tommy Overstreet and Baxter, Baxter & Baxter to A.M.I. Records. . . . Susan Rhee & the Orientals to Shepherd's Bush Records.

Musical Theatre Festival Planned For Philadelphia

By MAURIE ORODENKER

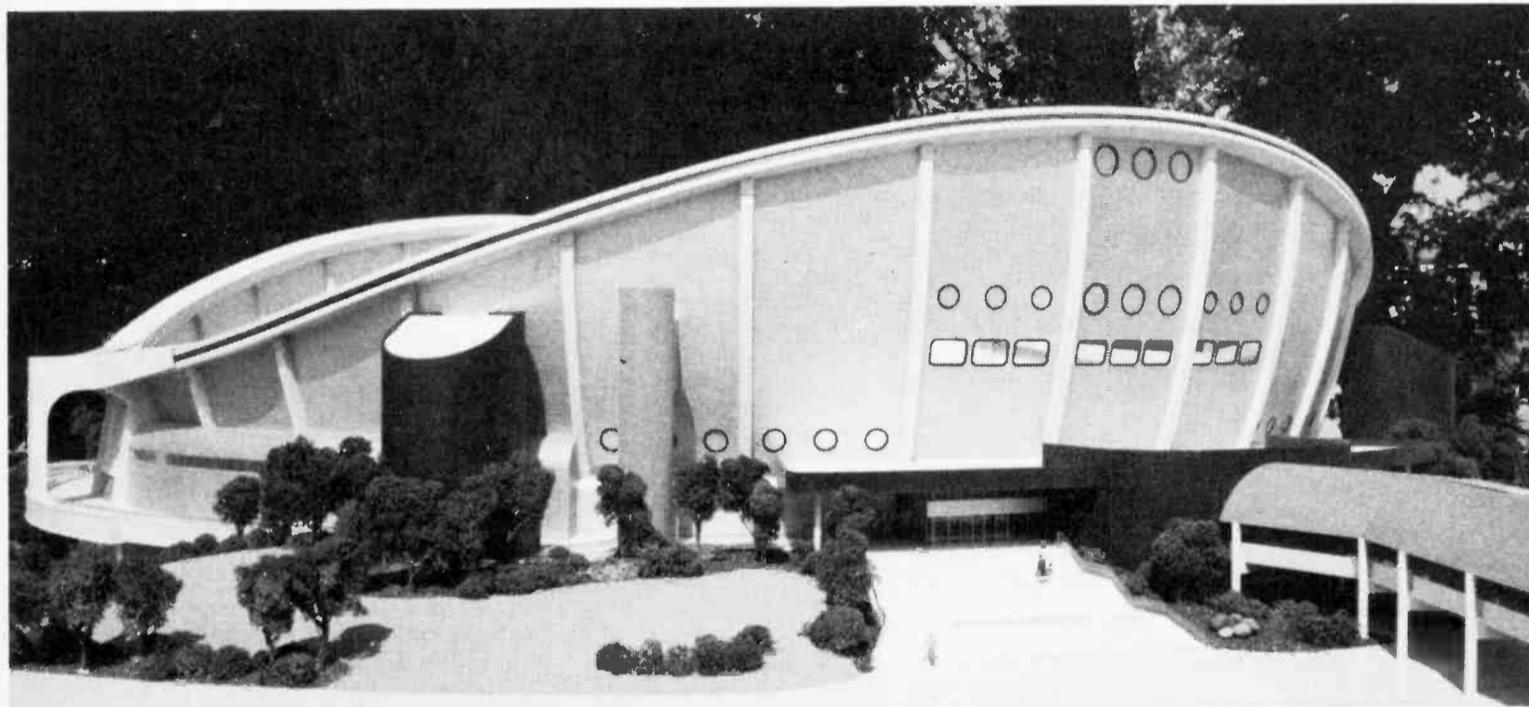
PHILADELPHIA—The American Music Theatre Festival (AMTF), a month-long series of musicals, operas and avant-garde musical theatre—both new works and revivals—will be staged here next summer by a new organization, with a projected budget of \$650,000 to \$1 million.

Marjorie Samoff is general director of the newly formed AMTF, and composer/critic Eric Salzman is the group's artistic director. Samoff was general manager of the Pennsylvania Opera Theatre, which scored a major success with a revival of "Candide." She says that AMTF has received development funding from the Sun Co., Girard Bank, Rohm & Haas, the city and the state Arts Council. Production grants are now being sought from foundations, corporations, the state and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The festival program will be centered at the Walnut Street Theatre and the Port of History Auditorium, both venues located near the city's tourist attractions and historical sites. Five productions are planned for the first season, says Samoff, but no specific works have been selected. She says the group expects to meet about half the cost through income from ticket sales and other projects, such as selling T-shirts and box lunches on at performances.

Salzman, who is also a lyricist and record producer, says the first year will concentrate on American works, with a major musical, a major opera and an experimental music theatre piece. In addition, there will be one or two smaller chamber productions, plus music theatre or opera for children. In later seasons, he says, he hopes to add one or more cabaret productions for late night performances. He adds that AMTF has long-range plans for festival productions designed to encourage the development of important new works and revivals of significant American music.

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