

FACING THE MUSIC

Singer, conductor reckon with their fading careers in romantic comedy 'Living on Love'

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**
FOR COAST WEEKEND

Living on Love," the Coaster Theatre Playhouse's spring production, is not a musical, but music is woven throughout the characters' histories, onstage antics and poignant relationships.

"There is a lot of music in it, but in weird kinds of ways," director Patrick Lathrop said.

The play, written by Joe DiPietro and running Friday, March 15, through Saturday, April 13, at the Coaster Theatre, follows two celebrated musical artists who are past middle age and nearing the end of their illustrious careers: Raquel De Angelis, the diva, as a famous opera singer and her husband, Vito De Angelis, the maestro, as an acclaimed orchestra conductor.

Grasping for new fame amid their declining careers, they each hire a young ghostwriter to assist in drafting their autobiographies. Relationships develop in unexpected ways and comedy ensues at the couple's 1957 Manhattan penthouse under the watchful eyes of the all-knowing servants, Eric and Bruce.

The show is like a sitcom — silly and over-the-top, Lathrop said.

"It's 'The Lucy Show,'" he said. The humor abounds in the unique characters, their relationships and their realization at the end that "everything they've been seeing is not as it really is."

An outrageous duo

Cathey Ryan's task has been finding her inner diva to portray Raquel in a way that makes her likable, albeit clueless and somewhat shortsighted.

"Raquel lives in an opera 24/7/365," Ryan said. "She says it at one point, that 'opera revels in the greatest of love and sorrow with heart-stopping beauty.' She's almost always 'on.'"

Yet, Ryan added, Raquel is not an intentional diva or petty and cruel. She does not create drama, but rather finds the drama in any given situation.

"She's not aware of the corner if she's on the sidewalk, but when she gets to the corner, then the corner is the world," she



Edward Stratton photos

The cast of Coaster Theatre Playhouse's 'Living on Love' includes, from left, Frank Jagodnik as Maestro Vito De Angelis; Thomas Ryan and David Sweeney as manservants Eric and Bruce, respectively; Bennett Hunter as ghostwriter Robert Samson; Emilee Andrade as Assistant Junior Editor Iris Peabody; and Cathey Ryan as Diva Raquel De Angelis.

IF YOU GO

'Living on Love,' a romantic comedy

When: 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, March 15 through April 13; 3 p.m. Sundays: March 24 and 31, and April 7

Where: Coaster Theatre Playhouse, 108 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach

For more information: Call 503-436-1242 or visit coastertheatre.com



Accompanying Diva Raquel De Angelis, played by Cathey Ryan, is usually her dog, Puccini.