

THEATER

Schoolcraft's production leaves you full of laughs

Schoolcraft College Theatre presents the comedy "The Man Who Came To Dinner" 6:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 2-3 at dinner theater, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 9-10, show only, at the Liberal Arts Theater on campus, 18600 Hoggerty Road, Livonia. Tickets \$21 dinner theater, \$10 performance only, call (734) 462-4400, Ext. 5467

BY BOB WEIBEL
SPECIAL WRITER

"The Man Who Came To Dinner" by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman is one of the great classic screwball comedies in American Theatre. Schoolcraft College dishes up a tasty feast of tart-tongued banter and succulent one-liners by the lead characters.

The play is loosely based on a collection of literary luminaries and show business friends who often met for lunch at the famous Algonquin Hotel in New York, to engage in witty repartee and acerbic fast-paced banter in the 1930s.

The show in some sense is a time capsule, and has been revised in some later TV and stage productions. Schoolcraft's version, and though some references to people and events may miss their mark with younger audiences, the comedy builds to a funny ending.

The focus of the play is on the acerbic Shoridan Whiteside, famed critic, radio personality

and friend of the great and near-great. It is said to be a take-off on critic Alexander Woollcott. During a speaking tour in Ohio, he breaks his hip on the doorstep of the Stanley's home. Whiteside threatens a lawsuit for \$150,000 and takes over the household.

We are treated to a parade of outrageous characters stopping by for a visit. Ray Van Hook is terrific as Whiteside, an unworshiped young man being fought over by two women. Whiteside hatches a plot to keep his secretary by bringing a famous actress to town to read Bort's play. Brenda Lano is alluring as Lorraine Sheldon (a woman with a reputation for seducing her leading men) and a totally theatrical character.

Sabrina Sanchez. Whiteside is often nasty to his secretary, Maggie Carter, especially when she becomes romantically involved with a local newspaperman and threatens to leave.

Andrea Smith gives a strong performance as the secretary and Jayce O'Brien is appealing as Bert Jefferson, an unworshiped young man being fought over by two women. Whiteside hatches a plot to keep his secretary by bringing a famous actress to town to read Bort's play. Brenda Lano is alluring as Lorraine Sheldon (a woman with a reputation for seducing her leading men) and a totally theatrical character.

Ginny Rajda creates a consistently weird sister of the Stan-

ley's who appears to have just escaped from a Frankenstein movie. Larry Rajda is very good as the Doctor who appears at odd times, attempting to get Whiteside to read his manuscript for a book. The stranger characters, however, are some of Whiteside's friends.

Don Quigley scores as Professor Metz, who shows up with house of cockroaches. Others show up with penguins, eels and assorted animals. Benjamin Karl is brilliant as Beverly Carlton, (who was said to be Noel Coward). He looks nothing like Coward, but he creates an absolutely vivid picture of an urbane British sophisticate.

And then there is Brian Taylor, as fine a performer as you'll

find in the Detroit area. He plays Banjo (said to be Harpo Marx) with the wild abandon of a young Dick Van Dyke. He appears near the end to save Whiteside from himself, and brings the house down with his physical and well-timed comedy.

The younger and less experienced performers would do well to pay attention to how he isn't afraid to go for it and create the extreme characterizations required by screwball comedy. Others in the large cast include Jeff Krupinski, Kellie Montheil, Danny R. Patrick, Lindsey R. Hall, Sandra Eggers, Carol Lipinski, Kyle Kopy, Jarod Buchert, Benjamin W. Karl, Carl Robert and Sarah Moeck.

Paradime from page B1

Another change, Paradime's backing band now includes Jay Bodley on guitar and keyboards, Dros Adamson on bass and Drew Schmieding on drums.

Those behind the scenes understand a little perseverance will go a long way. Scott Cavanaugh, a Mount Clemens resident met Paradime while working lights for Kid Rock around 1988. Once Atlantic Records nabbed the "American Bad Ass" Cavanaugh kept working with Paradime and is now considered an integral part of the live show. "Freddie was just the obvious choice," he said. "I enjoyed his music. I thought he was a great guy and I know he was an up-and-coming talent."

Paradime understands the importance of putting on a memo-

orable show. It must be working. Mark E.P. said they've earned more respect and street credibility over the years. "Once we're onstage it's always about doing our best."

Paradime has been a featured artist and winner at the Detroit Music Awards. He's practically a staple in local music media. "It doesn't change anything except it reminds me that something is happening," he said.

Catch "Microphone Kings 2001" featuring Paradime and the Beats of Will Crew, S.U.N., One Man Army, and DJ Heavy, 9:30 p.m. The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St. in Ann Arbor. 19 and older welcome. Cover \$6, call (734) 998-8555.

Don't forget to wish Paradime a happy birthday.

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