

'Star Spangled' comedy to open

Neil Simon's "Star Spangled Girl," directed by Pierre Turgion and produced by Edgar A. Quen III, opens Friday at the Somerset Dinner Theatre. The dinner theater is located in the Somerset Mall on Big Beaver Road at Coolidge, Troy.

The show will be presented all Friday and Saturday evenings through mid-July. A buffet dinner, prepared by Alfred's Restaurant, begins at 7:30 p.m. with an 8:45 p.m. curtain.

"Star Spangled Girl" is another of Neil Simon's enduring Broadway hits. The work was first presented in '68.

Pierre Turgion, who directs the play, has just completed a 16-week run in the starring role of Barney Cashman in "Last of the Red Hot Lovers" at Somerset "Lovers" previously had a three-month run at the Bedford Inn.

Following "Lovers" at Bedford, Turgion directed "Plaza Suite" for its second production.

FROM 185 years of theater experience, director actor Turgion wears both hats comfortably. He has directed "Mousetrap," "Death of a Salesman," "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" and many more. He has starred in "Acting Flower," "Kiss Me Kate," "Three Upon a Mattress," to mention only a few. He also has a talent for characterizations. Maud Frickert, the Dodge Sheriff and Lucky Lind, being the best known. He recently appeared with Andy Williams on Detroit television. Guest moves as easily as Turgion in the roles of actor, director, producer. For "Star Spangled Girl," he assumes the role of producer. Guest is a theater major and graduate of Denison University. He gained much experience performing in "The Man Who Came to Dinner" on a U.S. State Department tour of Japan, Korea and Okinawa.

He later toured Michigan, Ohio and New York as a one-man show on "American Humor." He has directed productions for countless local theatrical groups. Most recently he was the director for "Last of the Red Hot Lovers" which played six months between Bedford Inn and Somerset.

His credits in starring roles have been numerous and varied, the most recent being the lead in "Plaza Suite" which recently played the Bedford Inn.

The stars of "Star Spangled Girl" are all young, but they have racked up vast experiences both behind the footlights and behind the scenes. Colleen Burcar, in the leading role of Sophie Rauschmeyer, who won out over 40 other young hopefuls at the try-outs.

SHE IS a model, singer and actress with a BA in theater from Michigan State University. She has made numerous radio and television commercials for national companies. Her acting credits include "Bye, Bye Birdie," "Auntie Mame," "Glass Menagerie," "Barfot in the Park" and "Comedy." If she looks familiar, you probably saw her at one of the Detroit Auto Shows as a model-narrator for Ford or Chevrolet. She also has been star vocalist with several of the better-known orchestras in town.

John Powers, in the role of Andy Hobart, has had a well-rounded theatrical career as an actor, singer, dancer and mime. He has also spent considerable time behind the scenes learning the technical side of the business. He played Sir Lancelot in "Carnegie" locally, then repeated the performance in The Oldenberg Playhouse in South Bend.

Other acting credits include: "Fanny's Rainbow," "Forty Carats," "Don't Drink the Water," "Arms and the Man," "The Mousetrap" and "Macbeth." He has just returned from Washington, D.C., with the award-winning musical "The Me Nobody Knows" which was performed at the Kennedy Center.

Peter Schmidt plays Norman Cornell and not only is he an actor, but a dancer, too. His most recent starring role was in "Pajama Game" and a major performance in dance with the Lyovona Civic Ballet. He also performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, as a dancer, in "Romeo and Juliet."

He has been seen in "The Music Man," played the role of Charlie in "Where's Charlie" and danced in the musical



John Powers as Andy and Colleen Burcar in the starring role of Sophie Rauschmeyer appear in scene from 'Star Spangled Girl'

Rotherfield. He has performed in "The King and I" and "Gypsy and Dolls." He was a theater major at Oakland Community College and the recipient of a scholarship from Cranbrook's School of Theatre.

NANCY GLURWIN is assistant director for "Star Spangled Girl" and will be remembered in her role as the look-out of work, nightclub singer, Bobbie in "Lovers." Norma Hamberger, assistant producer for this production was a finalist in Miss Michigan World and the first female DJ and weather girl for WBCN in Midland.

She played the role of Blanche Dubois in "Street Car Named Desire" and also appeared in "Summer and Smoke," "Panic Your Wagon" and others.

"Star Spangled Girl" takes place in an apartment in San Francisco. The play revolves around Sophie Rauschmeyer, the epitome of "The All American Girl," an Olympic swimmer and two carvers, Andy and Norman, who put forth their creative talents to write and publish an underground magazine. Reservations may be made by calling 643-6885.

Finishing touches

Dawley Eller (left) and Mark Moore costar in the Birmingham Village Players production of "Finishing Touches." The show is being presented Friday and Saturday and on May 21 and 22. Curtain time is 9 p.m. at the playhouse, 475 S. Hunter. Tickets are priced for adults and students. Call 644-2075 for reservations.

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