



Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Musical director describes show

Back in 1965 Tenna Rose was a student teacher at Scholm High School. Today Ms. Rose is musical director of "The Fantasticks," the longest-running musical in the world, still playing at the Sullivan Street Theatre in New York.

She also is musical director of "The Other Half," one of three plays that will be presented by the John Houseman Acting Company in repertory at the Birmingham Theatre, Oct. 26-31.

By phone from her home in Brooklyn, Ms. Rose talked about her contribution to "The Other Half."

This is an all-woman play based on the writings and works of famous women in drama, comedy, music and poetry. It has been described as a tribute to the spirit, dedication and creativity of all womanhood.

A PLAY WITH MUSIC, "The Other Half" was written by Elinor Jones Harding, who was married to Tom Jones, co-author with Harvey Schmidt of "The Fantasticks."

"Ellie called me up and said she

was commissioned to write a play for the Acting Company," Ms. Rose said. "She wanted help with the music. I began to research old folk songs, English ballads and American tunes."

Explaining what kind of music they were looking for, Ms. Rose said, "We wanted the right feeling for the right period or writer. Some music is serious, ironic, or funny."

One song was "commissioned for 'The Other Half' and was the only music actually written for the show. No pianist accompanies the songs, which are done a cappella, or with an accompanist in the company playing guitar or autoharp.

Tenna Rose's unusual first name is actually a surname, she said, from her father's family in Cornwall, England. She was born and raised on a farm in Fowlerville, Mich., about 60 miles from Detroit.

HER SISTER-IN-LAW, Judy Rose, lives in Southfield and teaches journalism at Wayne State University. An uncle and aunt, George and Hope Nahstoll, live in Farmington and are

active with the Farmington Players.

After studying musical education with a major in organ at Michigan State, Tenna Rose did her student teaching in Birmingham.

"I went from Michigan to New York to get a master's degree in organ at Union Theological Seminary, then decided to stay in New York," she said.

She worked in a voice studio as an accompanist, then worked Off-Broadway musically directing "La Mama," then started working with Jones and Schmidt, who wrote a series of four experimental plays.

"I was one of three musicians who played for those," she said.

LAST YEAR "The Other Half" was done as a work in progress and this year opened in August in Saratoga, N.Y.

Performances of "The Other Half" will run Thursday-Saturday, Oct. 26-28, at 8 p.m., and a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. at the Birmingham Theatre. The repertory company also will

present, direct from Lincoln Center, two performances of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," Sunday, Oct. 29, at 2 and 8 p.m., and two performances of the Greek tragedy "Antigone," Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 30 and 31 at 8 p.m.

ROSANOVA PRODUCTIONS new Sunday night in Concert Series at db's Club in the Hyatt Regency Dearborn got off to a great start Sunday, with concerts at 4 and 8 p.m.

The concerts featured Johnny Trudell and his Orchestra, the 20-piece band that backs the name entertainers who play the club.

The big band offered smooth arrangements in polished performance of jazz classics and was highlighted with solos by Trudell on trumpet and flugelhorn, Dick Shearer on trombone, and Ray Witherspoon on vocals.

At the second concert (which actually started at 8:45 p.m.), the audience gave the band an enthusiastic reception throughout the evening's two-part program.

Musket does 'La Mancha'

UAC Musket will be performing "Man of La Mancha": Nov. 2-11 at Mendelssohn Theatre, Ann Arbor.

"Man of La Mancha" is the musical adaptation of Cervantes' "Don Quixote."

Set in 16th century Spain, the play tells of a simple squire who read too many tales of knights and fair damsels, and began to see himself as a knight-errant on a quest for the

"impossible dream."

Musket, the largest student-run theater group in the nation, is now in its 22nd year of producing musicals for the southeastern Michigan area.

Musket has added a ninth performance to its traditional eight. Tickets are on sale at Ticket Cent. al, Michigan Union, Ann Arbor or call 763-1107 for further information.

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