## Sensitivity heightens 'Carnival'

By HELEN ZUCKER

The Birmingham Vil-lage Players have hit a high note with a stunning production of Bob Merrill and Michael Stewart's

musical "Carnival." musical "Carnival."
Director Duncan Jones
and Musical Director
Priscilla Benton thoroughly understand both
the book and the music,
and the effects of their

and the effects of their sensitive interpretation is obvious everywhere. All Ratcliffe is excellent as B. F. Schlegel, the wheedling, slippery, hard-working, carnival owner who must keep the show on the road. Ratcliffe screws up his Jason Robards face, and slinking about like the fox in Pinnochio, shouts at his rambunctious assortment of lion tamers, snake charmers, aerialists, aerialists, charmers, aerialists, clowns, and temperamen-

charmers, aertainstaclowns, and temperamental artists:

"Children, make me
proud of You! Tariill me! of the best voice in the cast in adoes a fine job with a of this?" Hacilite gives us a Schlegel who is every bit as temperamental as the people who work for him, the simply camiler. His energy is wonderful.

THE GIFTED Don Jackson plays Jacquot, the lad who has spent his life in carnivals, the dedicated, good-hearted artist who truly loves his craft and whose idea of heaven is playing the Cirque de Paris. Jackson also plays my favortie character. and whose idea of heaven is playing the Cirque de Paris. Jackson also plays my favorite character, Horrible Henry, a green walrus puppet, who has the best lines in the show, and Beagard, the fav.

Review

puppets who make up the Renardo is another puppet in a foursome of "play within a play" in "Carnival." Jackson has range, and his animated voice shricking with joy over having his "loosks" (Henry's Tusks) touched, or dropping into the doldrums as he gives us a rundown of his favorite operas. "Barbara of Seville" and "The Madame in Butterfly," is sheer delight. (I've never been able to stand puppet shows, yet I found the puppet cruding. The lines have genuine charm, and the actors make the most of them). Bud Matyeth plays Carlos and the played to have good to be a supper short of the stand puppet shows, yet lines have genuine charm, and the actors make the most of them). Bud Matyeth plays Carlos and the stand puppet shows yet lines have genuine charm, and the actors make the most of them).

make the most of them). Bud Matych plays Carrot Top and Madame, the other two puppets. He has the best voice in the cast and does a fine job with a difficult role. Matych plays Paul Berthalet, the bitter, ex-dancer who has lost the use of one leg and he has become a puppeteer.

MATYCH TURNS IN the strongest perform-ance of the evening, and his rich voice is especial-

Detroit Institute of Arts

ly effective in the songs
"Tve Got to Find a
Reason," "Her Face" and
the duet." Hate Him."

Del Moore as Lili is not
quite the equal of
Matych. Ms. Moore is a
marvelous singer; she
hits high C's with ease.
But the role of Lili, the
"good girl" mixed up
with crazy, cynical carny
people — the dewdrop
among exotic jungle flowers — is a hard bit to
pull off.

I think this is a fault of
the script, not of Ms.

we laugh at his villatinous behavior.

"Paul, you do show up at the oddest 'times," Dike 'Dwelley is to be Marco says, pouting, as commended. Especially the enraged Berthalet cirries to get him away in the discontinuous control sets, from Jili

Connie Molnar, who de-signed the wonderful sets. Special credits to Marga-ret Remondino who cre-ated the puppets. And to DeeDee Johns Charlton and Debi Diehl for the

and Debi Diehl for the wonderful choreography. "Carnival" runs Fri day-Saturday, Feb. 2, 3, and 10 at the Village Playhouse, located at Hunter and Chestnut.

at the coccess. Threes, and the duet. That Gillians the duet. The dillians the duet. The dillians the duet. The dillians the duet. The dillians th

\$2 for children and adults at the museum ticket office.

Something through May, call the Devenor For ticket information to the control of Arts.

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Sunday Theater Special, 3 p.m., Museum Theater Feb. 25—"John Brown's Body" For further information, call 271-1620





Dining And Entertainment Guide

Magic, ventriloquism accented

Two hour-long performances are scheduled, at at the museum ticket office.



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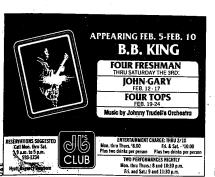
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