

Broadway hits comprise new Music Hall series



"Da" starring Bernard Hughes will be presented April 1-13 at Detroit's Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts.

Three recent Broadway hits — a musical, a drama and a comedy — comprise the newly created 1980 Music Hall Theatre Series, it has been announced by producing director J. Roland Wilson.

The productions are last year's highly acclaimed black musical, "Eubie!" based on the music of the legendary Eubie Blake; the unanimous best play of the 1977-78 season, "Da," with the original Broadway star, Bernard Hughes; and this season's spicy British comedy, "Bedroom Farce," starring June Lockhart, Tom Ewell and Jill Haworth.

"This series of varied, proven Broadway hits should give us a reliable indication of what the audience demand is for first-class theatre attractions at the downtown Music Hall," Wilson said.

"If we find the audience we expect, that will encourage us to explore an expanded schedule and even consider local production in the years ahead."

THE MUSIC HALL has already established so-called Dance, Family and Headliner series.

"A strutting razzmatazz celebration done with consummate style," wrote N.Y. Post critic Clive Barnes in describing the Broadway opening night of "Eubie!"

Boasting a cast of 12 singers and dancers, this hit revue is a glorification in song and dance of the music of 95-year-old Eubie Blake. With 1,500 songs from which to choose, "Eubie!" glitters

with such all-time hits as "I'm Just Wild about Harry," "Daddy, Won't You Please Come Home?" and "Memories of You" and is highlighted by many of Blake's fun songs such as "My Handyman Ain't Handy No More."

"Eubie!" ran 432 performances on Broadway and garnered Tony nomination for both the score and the choreography.

"Da" completely captivated the theater world when it opened at New York's Morosco Theatre, sweeping an incredible 14 major dramatic awards for the 1977-78 season. The bittersweet Irish comedy not only won the Tony Award for Best Play but was accorded the same high honor by the Drama Critics, the Drama Desk and the Outer Critics Circle.

Bernard Hughes, who will recreate his title role at the Music Hall, won three Best Actor awards including the coveted Tony. Appearing with Hughes in Detroit will be his wife, actress Helen Stenborg, and his daughter, Laura Hughes, who is making her professional debut.

ALAN AYCKBOURN'S British import, "Bedroom Farce," has been running for 2 1/2 years in London's West End and won two Tonys when it hit Broadway last year.

This classic farce mixes four couples, only three bedrooms and the talents of June Lockhart, Tom Ewell and Jill Haworth. Time magazine called the play "high manic hilarity" and reported "the laughs are nonstop."



Alan Ayckbourn's "Bedroom Farce" starring June Lockhart and Tom Ewell opens April 29 and runs through May 11 at the Music Hall. Jill Haworth also is starred in the British comedy.

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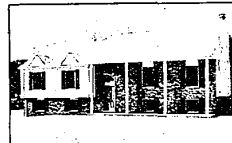
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