

Church produces dramatic opera

By MARY DOERR

teaches voice professionally. Vondrak is one of her pupils.

Those who missed the performance of Benjamin Britten's opera "Noye's Fludde" this past weekend will have another chance to see it.

WVXZ, Channel 7, taped the Friday evening production. The four performances of the opera which portrays the Biblical story of Noah and the ark were sold out. Those who didn't get tickets may be able to see the Channel 7 broadcast.

Under the able direction of Frederic DeHaven of Christ Church in Grosse Pointe, the members of the Orchard Lake church produced a dramatic opera which drew on the professional and non-professional talent in the surrounding community.

Taking the lead as Noye and delivering a splendid performance was Mark Vondrak of Birmingham. Vondrak, who received his bachelor's in voice from Oakland University, is a member of the Kenneth Jewell Choral and has been seen in the productions of the Michigan Lyric Opera Company.

Barbara Windham of Bloomfield Hills, sang the part of Mrs. Noye and was as outstanding as her credits would indicate. She has soloed with the Detroit Symphony, the Kenneth Jewell Choral, and at Brunch with Bach. She

IN THE SUPPORTING ROLES as Noye's sons, Jaffett, Sem, and Ham were Neil C. Hodger, member of the Kirk in the Hills' choir, Bruce Snyder, choral director at Andover High School, and Brooks Crankshaw, a student at Andover High School. Their voices blended well with the three wives, sung by Jackie Mattisse, Doris Williams, and Victoria Vock.

The 80-member chorus, consisting of church members included 50 children beginning with third graders. The talents of Jean Panarotes, musical director and organist, were evident as the one responsible for training the chorus before DeHaven arrived on the scene.

The orchestra of 45 musicians consisted of professionals and students from Andover and Lahser high schools, who were members of the Bloomfield Hills Honors String Quartets and Chamber Orchestra. The Andover High School Jills provided lustre to the effects with their handbells. Those who played the recorders were from the Metropolitan Detroit Recorder Society.

Britten composed the work as a church opera using a Chaucerian English libretto from a Medieval Chester miracle play. These plays were performed in the English towns during the

Middle Ages and included the townspeople.

Britten updated this concept in his composition. The first thing the audience learned when they arrived was that they must rehearse. Since Britten had included three hymns to be sung by the congregation, the audience must practice. A complete libretto was provided.

FROM THE FIRST SOUNDS OF THE DRUMS and gong, the opera was dramatic. Everyone felt a part of the performance as the singers and dancers came down into the audience.

One of the most impressive scenes in the show was the march of the pairs of animals onto the boat. Four trumpets introduced each group.

The scene that followed was even more beautiful, reflecting the talent of Bill Marschner, technical director, and due to the brilliance of the costumes rented from Connecticut. They were the costumes made for the national 1973 TV broadcast.

The high waters and the storm were symbolized by dancers who finally receded to the back of the church as Noye calmed the animals while everyone joined in singing the well known Noye

hymn. When co-producer Laurie Dreisbach made the suggestion of the opera to the church last September, she was joined by co-producer Kay Albrecht and the obvious cooperation of the entire congregation.

The purpose of the production was one of fellowship and involvement for the church, and the opportunity for members of the community to utilize their talents.

IT WAS DE HAVEN who insisted on the simplicity of the church sanctuary as the setting in keeping with Britten's original intentions.

The purpose of providing an opportunity for shut-ins to see live opera was realized in their benefit performance for 11 groups of senior citizens, many impaired, and hospital residents from the surrounding area.

The Episcopal Church of the Advent should be commended for an outstanding job. The operatic form was executed in such a way that it was palatable to anyone unfamiliar with it.

From the professionalism of the performances to the graciousness of the reception that followed, the church realized its goals.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Schwartz of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter Marybeth to John D. Robinson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dorvil Robinson of Farmington Hills.

The bride to be and her fiancé are both graduates of North Farmington High School.

She is employed as a secretary with Travelers Insurance Company in Southfield. He is a student at Oakland Community College.

A wedding is planned for the fall of 1981.

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Brown-Rytel

Karen Sue Rytel and James Delmar Brown II were wed in a double ring ceremony in Ravine Gardens, Palatka, Fla. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard E. Rytel of Farmington Hills. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. County Police Academy and is a deputy sheriff for Putnam County.

For her wedding, the bride wore a high waisted, long gown with billowy sleeves fashioned with lace cuffs and satin buttons. She carried a bouquet of

typed roses and baby's breath. The bride is a graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School and attended Michigan State University. She is employed with Holiday Inn in Palatka. The groom is a graduate of Putnam County Police Academy and is a deputy sheriff for Putnam County.

The couple received guests at a buffet dinner in Welaka Town Hall. They will make their home in Satsuma, Fla.

Kansik-Flack

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick C. Kansik of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter Naomi Ruth to Tony Scott Flack, son of Mrs. Wanda Flack of Walled Lake.

The bride-to-be and her fiancé are both graduates of Clarenceville High

School. She is employed with the U.S. Postal Service in Livonia. He is a student at Lawrence Institute of Technology.

A wedding is planned late this month in Ward United Presbyterian Church.

LWV marks anniversary with 1980 Forum Series

The League of Women Voters (LWV) of the Detroit Metropolitan Area will celebrate the nationwide observance of its 60th anniversary year with participation in the 1980 Presidential Forum Series carried by public television stations and national public radio.

The metropolitan area league includes the Birmingham-Bloomfield Branch, the Livonia Branch, the Northville-Plymouth-Canton-Novi Branch, the Rochester Area Branch, the Southfield-Lathrup Village Branch and the West Bloomfield-Farmington Area Branch.

In Detroit, the league will also report its publication, "Do You Rent?" The brochure explains tenant's rights and responsibilities and can be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Neva Carter, 31099 Verona Dr. Farmington Hills 48018.

Howard K. Smith moderates the 1980 Presidential Forum Series, carried live in this area by Channel 55 which runs from 8:30-10 p.m. beginning Tuesday, Feb. 19 with the Democrats, and Wednesday, Feb. 20 with the Republicans in Manchester, N.H.

Chicago, Ill. is the next site, scheduled for March 12-13, followed by sessions in Houston, Tex., April 22-23.

Dates will be announced for the fourth forum to be held in San Francisco, Calif.

FOUNDED IN 1920, the year Women's Suffrage was written into the U.S. Constitution, the league accepted the task of educating the nation's 20 million newly enfranchised women on how to carry out their responsibilities as informed voters.

Before long the league has enlarged its scope to provide voters services for all citizens.

The guiding principle of active and informed citizen participation in the political process has remained the keystone in the development of the league's present day multi-faceted agenda.

In Washington, D.C. the national league sponsors an exhibit in Woodrow Wilson House through June depicting the organization's 60 years of activities.

Libby Richards, president of the Detroit Metropolitan Area LWV described the exhibit by saying, "It spans our activities with memorabilia from the suffrage movement to shaping social legislation, encouraging international peace, striving to shape policy in environmental energy."

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