

'The Good Doctor' colorfully done in campus show



Christopher Howe (top) of Rochester and Peter McBryan of Grosse Pointe Woods are dentist and patient in "The Surgery," from Neil Simon's "The Good Doctor."

By BARBARA MICHALS

Neil Simon's "The Good Doctor," adapted and suggested from stories by Anton Chekhov, is an unusual hybrid. As currently nurtured by the Oakland University Theatre Arts Program, the show blooms with color and vitality; it is well-staged and well-acted.

"The Good Doctor" continues its run with performances at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday Feb. 14-16 and 21-24. There are Sunday matinees at 2:30 p.m. and a 6:30 performance on Feb. 17 on campus near Rochester.

"Doctor" grafts the 20th century comic genius of America's Simon onto the zany characters and situations originally conceived by Chekhov, the 19th century Russian known best for his serious dramatic works.

The nine vignettes that highlight human foibles are delightfully funny yet often mixed with a warm pathos.

TYING THE SKETCHES together is

review

the presence of the writer-narrator, who keeps up a running patter between scenes as well as enacting some of his own characters.

Christopher Howe does an outstanding job as the young Chekhov, engaging the audience with his twinkling eyes and charming smile as well as with his smooth delivery. He never fails to be convincing.

For this production, the Studio Theatre of Varner Recital Hall features a thrust stage. Chekhov's desk is set at the rear of the intimate theater, allowing Howe good interaction with the audience as he goes to and from the stage. Director James Hatfield's multi-level set design also works quite well.

Among the many talented cast mem-

bers, Peter McBryan is a standout as the helpless civil servant in "The Sneeze." Out for an evening at the theater, he has the misfortune to give a might sneeze that lands on the back of his superior's head. Deeply humiliated, the sneezer so magnifies the incident out of all proportion that he soon ruins his life.

McBryan also shines as the cowardly toothache victim who consults "the good doctor" only to find that the doctor is out-of-town. He is left at the mercy of an inept novice, nicely played by Howe.

MATT TOMLANOVICH, McBryan's long-suffering superior in "The Sneeze," finds himself even more put-upon when he plays a bank official harassed by "A Defenseless Creature," a woman (Jane Shulte) about as defenseless as a charging rhino.

Both McBryan and Tomlanovich excel at facial expressions reflecting

their torment and frustration. The two are paired again in "A Quiet War," in which they play an old soldier and aged sailor who delight in arguing about every subject under the sun, including the sun.

In "The Governors," Cynthia Cole is the good-natured, trusting soul who consistently allows her employers to cheat her. Janet Bogema appears charmingly flighty as the employer, who tries to instill some gumption into the governors.

Karlene Cook is captivating as the naive young wife in "The Seduction." Though it seems "he is destined to be another success chucked up by the devious bachelor (Howe), a friend of her husband's who specializes in married women, she cleverly turns the tables on the trickster. Edward Asher is amusing as the husband who is unwittingly turned the bachelor's accomplice.

Theater offers children's show

Spies, ham sandwiches, sea captains, creatures and cowboys from Remy Charlip's children's book will come to life in a colorful musical revue at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday on Detroit Youthcenter's stage for its "Something Every Saturday" audiences.

The performances are scheduled in the Detroit Institute of Arts auditorium/theatre. Tickets for children and adults and for groups of 10 or more may be purchased through the Art Institute ticket office (832-7339) and at the door.

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Board names new member

Lee I. (Buzz) Turner of Bloomfield Hills has been elected to the board of directors of Will-O-Way, now a non-profit educational corporation.

Turner is a partner in the law offices of Turner and Turner, P.C., in Southfield.

Turner has been an active supporter and performer at Will-O-Way, now a non-profit educational corporation. Turner is not related to the theater's director, Celia Merrill Turner, or her

husband, theater manager Ken Turner. Will-O-Way is well known for training thousands of performers for the stage and screen.

Lee Turner's educational background includes Juris Doctor Cum Laude from Ohio State University College of Law in 1969 and a bachelor's science degree from Ohio State University in 1966. He is also a member of Michigan Trial Lawyers Association and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

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