

Young troupers perform 'Wizard'

By DONALD V. CALAMIA

While most young people have been spending their summer months out in the sun, about 45 youthful thespians have been working diligently towards producing what they feel will be their best production ever.

Sponsored by the City of Southfield, Department of Parks and Recreation, the Southfield Summer Music Theatre will present the musical version of "The Wizard of Oz" at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday at Southfield-Lathrup High School on W. 12 Mile Road east of Evergreen.

Purpose of the program, according to producer John W. Puchalski, is to give local teenagers an extension of their high school theater programs. "We give them the opportunity to learn new and different techniques while taking on more of the show's responsibilities," he said.

"In fact, we picked 'The Wizard of Oz' primarily because it's different than the classical form of musical theater the kids have been used to doing.

"IT WILL REQUIRE much more from them as actors and actresses, as children's theater requires performers to relate more to the audience than would a straight adult show."

Though the ultimate objective of the group is to put on a musical production supervised by theater professionals, the program is also designed to be an educational workshop series.

"The performers are learning new styles of acting, and the set crew is learning to utilize steel in their set construction," Puchalski said.

Auditions for the show took a full week. Eric M. Johnson, a recent theater graduate of the University of Detroit said, "One of the first things I had to do with the kids as director of the show was to get them to just read the script. They were giving me dialects and were being cute with the characters."

"Naturally, a lot of these kids have not developed the basic skills of acting.

They've been taught some of the techniques, stage directions, how to talk loud, and how to show emotions, and that's about it.

"We've tried to stress to them that the bigger-than-life quality of theater does not mean the actors have to be unreal. I think they're learning that the most important thing about acting is being honest and believable. Once you've got those qualities, you can go anywhere with your characters."

BESIDES PUCHALSKI, who also produces the Southfield Civic Theatre, and Johnson, other theater professionals working on the project are choreographer Angelina Fierdolist, recently named best actress of the season by theater critic Lawrence Devine of the Detroit Free Press; musical director Darian Martus, who appears with Other Things and Company, a local touring theater company; consumer Barbara Oleszczuk, who has directed and costumed numerous local theater productions; Technical Director Ron Swedel, a Southfield High School graduate studying technical theater at Western Michigan University; and set designer Kimberly Kirkpatrick, who has designed sets for several theaters including the Birmingham Theatre.

Another innovation this season, according to Puchalski, is that each performance will be "signed" for the benefit of the hearing-impaired audience. "Betty Miller and John Ray of the Detroit Hearing and Speech Center will be at all four performances to provide this service to our community," Puchalski said. "This will give an extra opportunity for our hearing-impaired audience to see live theater in the Detroit area."

"IN FACT, we're so excited about this, that we're also going to utilize this service for at least one performance of every Southfield Civic Theatre show this season, too."

The real challenge, Johnson said will come not from a tough children's audience but from the adults. "We're mak-

ing this production interesting to people of all ages. Adults will love this show as much as their kids. Fairy tales are not just for youngsters. Everyone can enjoy them. 'Wizard of Oz' is nothing but a complete fairy tale for young and old alike."

Further information regarding "Wizard of Oz" can be obtained by calling 354-4717.



Musical director Darian Martus takes accompanist Andrea Fahey through one of the songs in "The Wizard of Oz."



Lee Marvin is the sergeant, a soldier in two global wars whose life is a world of combat, in "The Big Red One."

the movies
Louise Snider

Camera focuses on action scenes not characters

Except for a relatively dry spell during the Korean war, films about soldiers and battle have been among Hollywood's staples, from the uncomplicated heroics of "Wake Island" to the complexities and scope of "The Deer Hunter" and "Apocalypse Now."

The most common variation on the theme is to follow the fortunes of a particular group of soldiers through their combat experience. That's what "The Big Red One" (PG) does.

The camera traipses along as a grizzled sergeant (Lee Marvin) and a squad of young recruits ("wet noses," he calls them) fight their way from North Africa to Sicily and Western Europe.

The film opened to good reviews at the Cannes Film Festival and was well received by the French press whose critics pride themselves on being the first to appreciate the bold, direct style of writer-director Samuel Fuller.

FULLER, BETTER KNOWN abroad than in the United States, impressed a small, alert number of critics with a succession of low-budget, hard-hitting, action-adventure films, including "Pick-up on South Street," "Hell and High Water," "Forty Guns" and "Shock Corridor."

Fuller's achievements have been overlooked by many, but "The Big Red One" is hardly the vehicle to rectify the neglect. The film lacks exactly the quality that distinguishes his other films, the stamp of the director who imprints his own style and vision on a work.

This is all the more surprising when you consider that the drama is based loosely on Fuller's own experiences in World War II.

Conceived 35 years ago while he was a corporal with the 1st Infantry Division (known as the Big Red One because of the red shoulder slash insignia), the movie may have materialized too late. His experiences seem to have been dulled by time. For a film that is semi-autobiographical, there is an amazing absence of personal involvement and emotion.

In the press notes, Fuller is quoted as saying that he "decided the film should be a very intimate story, where the heart was exposed and the private emotion stripped to the bone." But that is exactly what the film avoids.

THERE IS SO LITTLE interaction and dialogue among the men that after two hours we've hardly learned anything about the principal characters.

Even when one of the soldiers (Griff) has a problem, it is not really shared with us. There are several references suggesting Griff is a coward, but the film introduces the subject and leaves it. We never learn more about his background, his feelings, how he handles his fear and how he survives the long string of campaigns.

The absence of character development puts the burden on the action scenes to maintain our interest. Here again the film fails. There's a lot of noise, but not much excitement and almost no suspense.

The squad locates enemy artillery, cleans out snipers from a town and a forest, keeps slogging or doing whatever it is ordered to do. That's fine for soldiers, but not for drama and not for audiences.

what's at the movies

NEW RELEASES

AIRPLANE (PG). A picture that takes off. This spoof of all those "Air- port" movies is one of the zaniest films around.

THE BIG RED ONE (PG). World War II from the North African campaign through Normandy and Europe as told through the eyes of a combat veteran and four young soldiers.

THE BLUES BROTHERS (R). A film that's as unoriginal and dreary as it is expensive (very) with one meatball scene after another and enough car crashes to make AAA go belly up.

BRUBAKER (R). Serious drama with Robert Redford as reform warden fighting corruption on state prison farm.

CAN'T STOP THE MUSIC (PG). But it wouldn't be a bad idea to try.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (PG). "Star Wars" sequel unites original cast in continuation of battle against the evil empire.

FAME (R). Lots of young talent in vibrant musical about students at New York's School of Performing Arts.

HONEYUCKLE ROSE (PG). Willie Nelson is the center of attention in story about a country-western star who forgets he's married whenever he's on tour, which is most of the time.

MOUNTAIN MEN (R). Charlton Heston as one of the tough breed of men who hunted in the wilds of the Rockies in the early 1800s.

ROUGH CUT (R). Diamond thief Burt Reynolds falls for Scotland Yard decoy Leslie-Anne Down.

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

- G General audiences admitted.
- PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
- R Restricted. Adult must accompany person under 18.
- X No one under 18 admitted.

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE ON THE TOWN

Pearl's Garden
the Finest in Chinese & American Cuisine
469 S. Woodward, B'ham.
644-2913
Mon.-Thurs. 11-10 p.m. • Fri. 11-11 p.m.
Sat. 12-11 p.m. • Sun. 12-10 p.m.

梅 MOV'S RESTAURANT
1805 MIDDLERET AVE. N. B'ham, ALABAMA
Cantonese & American Food
Japanese Steakhouse
Exotic Cocktails
CARRY-OUTS ON CHINESE FOOD
Chinese Lunch 11:30-2:30
Chinese Dinner 5:30-10:30
For Reservations Phone 427-2121
Closes Monday

Dine Out Tonight

Tuesday Night is
Inflation Fighter Night
At The
Shalea Inn
\$6.91
per person
Featuring: Fried Frog Legs (All you eat)
served with: Cheese Crack and
Cappuccino, Salad, French
Fries, Roll and Butter
852-3410
3315 Auburn Road
Between Adams & Opdyke Rd.

WHAT'S MERRICKS...
You may have heard about Merricks Restaurant. But, can you find us?
Tuesday through Thursday discover Merrick's Night. Anyone who finds their way to us between now and Sept. 30, 1980 is invited to enjoy one complimentary entree when a second entree of equal or greater value is purchased. This coupon is good Tues.-Thursday evenings. From 5:30-9:30 pm only.
Located at American Center in Southfield
for easy to follow directions & reservations CALL US AT
353-8144

THERE'S ROOM AT THE INN

A thoughtful way to welcome visitors or clients is a reservation at the Kingsley Inn. We are near all business, sports, and educational centers in Oakland County.

Kingsley Inn
Woodward and Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills
644-1400 564-5144

Son of "STAR SHIP ENCOUNTERS"

Members of the
DETROIT SYMPHONY POPS
with a
SPECTACULAR LASER-LIGHT SHOW
Richard Hayman, conducting
Music from Outer Space
Copland: Fanfare for the Common Man
Courage and Goldsmith: Themes from "Star Trek"
Phillips and Larson: Themes from "Battleground"
Sriarr: Theme from "The Lost Galaxy"
Barry: Theme from "Moonraker"
Holst: Selections from "The Planets"
— Mars, Venus and Jupiter
Strauss-Hayman: Theme from "2001 — A Space Odyssey"
Williams: Theme from "Superman"
Williams: Suite from "Close Encounters of the Third Kind"
Barry: Theme from "The Black Hole"
Williams: Suite from "Star Wars"

AUGUST 10th SOLD OUT
Good Seats Still Available
for
AUGUST 11 — 8:30 p.m.
\$10-9.8 \$5 Lawn

MEADOW BROOK MUSIC FESTIVAL '80
Tickets On Sale Now at Meadow Brook Box Office.
Hudson's and other Convenient Ticket Company locations.
Seals, Grumet's and Discount Records.
or Call 377-2010 for Credit Card Orders

Did you know we can find a breast cancer as small as the head of a pin?

Such a tiny cancer can almost always be cured. Mammography, a technique of low dose breast x-ray, can detect a cancer long before a lump can be felt. While it is still highly curable. If you are over 50 or have special reasons to be concerned with breast cancer, ask your doctor about mammography.

American Cancer Society

DINE OUT

PICK UP YOUR FEET
at **Fanny's**
There's music every single night.
It's live Monday through Saturday and Disco on Sunday.
Troy Hilton Inn
Maple Rd. at Stephenson Hwy.
Troy, Michigan
(313) 583-9000