

Restaurant offers cabaret theater

A new entertainment policy featuring international cabaret starts Friday in the new After Nine Room at Cooper's Arms, 306 Main, Rochester.

The announcement was made by Roger Knapp, proprietor of Cooper's Arms.

The initial attraction is "Sailor Beware," a satirical evening of song and dance. The Metropolitan Repertory Company of Michigan will be the company in residence, offering new cabaret productions approximately every eight weeks.

"Sailor Beware" features a cast of six professional singers, dancers and actors. Produced by Eric Jones of Oak Park, the show was conceived and directed by Robert Casemore of Birmingham.

Choreography is by Penny Masouris of Detroit and John Beem of Troy.

Beem, a film actor as well, just completed a major role in the new Karl Malden motion picture, "Word of Honor."

BESIDES MS. MASOURIS and Beem the cast includes Jeanine Head of Dearborn, Sue Chekaway of Lathrup Village, Walt Konitz of Detroit and pianist Joe Mathia of Livonia.

Cabaret is essentially European in flavor, seen by audiences on the continent and in New York City, Toronto, Chicago and San Francisco. "Metropolitan Detroit has not had the pleasure," said Knapp. "Now they will because cabaret, uniquely different, is enjoying fantastic resurgence."

The After Nine Room was especially created for cabaret. Tickets are by reservation only. For reservations call 651-2265.



JEANINE HEAD



JOHN BEEM



SUE CHEKAWAY

Entertainment abounds aboard old Noah's Ark

By BARBARA MICHALS

review

A musical about Noah's Ark? Can such a topic be entertaining?

"Two by Two," as presented by Oakland University's Department of Music is a zestful show providing top-notch entertainment that never slackens.

The exceptionally talented cast does a fine job with Martin Charmin's lyrics and Richard Rodgers' music, the last score Rodgers wrote before his death.

The musical is based on the play, "The Flowering Peach" by Clifford Odets.

"Two by Two" continues Wednesday-Sunday on the OU campus near Rochester.

As Noah, Robert Poynton's energetic performance is outstanding. Poynton has a powerful voice and a magnetic stage presence; he is a young man with tremendous potential.

ON HIS 600TH birthday, Noah is forewarned of the coming flood and instructed by God to build an ark. "Why Me?" he musically protests. His first problem is to convince his family that

he is not senile. "Put Him Away" they sing in reaction to this ark business.

Next, Noah must find a wife for his youngest son, Japheth, for God has instructed that all who board the ark must come "two by two." Bruce Florine is highly convincing as the rebellious Japheth, torn between his duty to his family and his doubts about a vengeful God.

Noah must also convince all three of his sons that the ark doesn't need a rudder, for God will steer. When the vessel nearly founders in the storm, Noah grudgingly consents to use a rudder.

He cannot forgive himself for having abandoned his faith, though it appears that God helps those who also help themselves.

Rob Yuergens and James Lesman are effective as the two older sons, Shem and Ham, and lend able vocal support on numbers like "You Have Got to Have a Rudder on the Ark" and "Poppa Knows Best."

Leah, Poynton plays Esther, Noah's wife, as the universal Jewish mama, wanting only the best for her children and adeptly calming an irate papa with a good meal. Ms. Poynton nicely captures the Yiddish inflections without overdoing it, but it does not seem necessary to stress Esther's advanced age by speaking so softly.

Leah is disliked but tolerated by her in-laws, who favor Ham's wife Rachel.

Everyone loves sweet-natured Rachel except her husband. As Rachel, Judy Ann Richer's singing voice is especially pleasing.

"Something Doesn't Happen," she laments of her five-year marriage, and Ms. Richer contributes a haunting quality to the ballad "I Do Not Know a Day I Did Not Love You."

Tami Pryce is effervescent as Goldie, the gentle girl who comes along as a possible wife for Japheth.

Everything about this production of "Two by Two" seems to sail along effortlessly, and there are obviously some talented people at the helm.

Director and choreographer Stevie Rivers and assistant director David

Pfeiffer have the show moving at a brisk pace and do a nice job of utilizing the small stage.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR Sally Albrecht leads a seven-piece orchestra that works well throughout. Other memorable musical numbers in the show are the iconoclastic "Something Somewhere" and the very bouncy "Two by Two."

James Hatfield's clever set efficiently converts from Noah's home into the ark. The special sound effects are quite realistic.

Johanna Lubkowski's costumes seem perfectly suited to the Biblical setting. All in all, Oakland University's "Two by Two" is a real charmer.

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