The Eccentric Birmingham-Bloomfield Edition

entertainment

Characters pale in 'End of Ramadan'

The world premiere of Charles Notie's drama, "End of Ramadan," continues through Feb. 21 at Mead-on Brook Theatre on the Oakland University campus near Rochester. Performances are at 8.30 p.m. Tuesdays-Fridays, 6 and 9.30 p.m. Staturdays, 6.30 p.m. Sundays and 2 p.m. Wednesdays. For ticket infor-nation call the box office at 377-3000.

By Helen Zucker special writer

Meadow Brook Theatre's world premiere of Charles Nolte's "End of Ramadan" promises much. The set by C. Lance Brockman is ter-rific, one of the best sets at MBT Ive seen. Arabic music, the Roman Ruins at Baalbek, a wonderful hilltop hotel,

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Barbara Berge plays the responsible English wife, Phyllis. Phyllis seems more concerned about the women Max chases than she does about him. She's a "End of Ramadan" is like a brilliant red balloon that loses its helium as you watch. chases than she does about intri. She s a ramrod-straight, strenuous woman. She generates enough moral energy to make everyone else seem a slovenly, uncouth, amoral, lazy clod.

When Phylis leaves for Britain (tak-ing the lush 16-year-old Pamela with her), we hope she is going to have an affair or at least get drunk. I liked Ms. Brege's energetic performance. I know I was meant to appreciate Phyllis, the sait of the earth, but there wasn't any woman behind the Girl Scout to like.

Mary Benson tones down considera-bly when she admits to being "a silly woman," but we know Ruth Spicer, cliche tourist, has always been a silly

man and Buth's moment of revelawoman and Ruth's moment of revera-tion, touching as Ms. Benson tries to make it, tells us nothing we don't al-ready know.

RANDALL FORTE is quick on his feet and amusing as Acrim, the Muslim student/servant the Murrays have tak-en in to educate. He leaps about shout-ing "Styria for the Syrianst" He tells Max, "Your Bible is a depressing book," practices love with Pamela (an-other servari/stary) and can I reverse gears, thus landing the car in the pool. The onset of World War II leaves Acrim massaging Max's hair.

Anne Shropshire does her best as an aged pilgrim, Mrs. Shadbolt, a tourist who is traveling light, "toward the

sun." Wil Love is wonderful as Finley, the loungeabout, who goes off "to dig ditches or drive trucks" instead of sing-ing affably. I didn't believe in Finley in, the least, but it's nice to see good actors doing what they can

Mary Pat Gleason and Jillian Lindig Mary Yat Gietason and Jilian Lihoug do more than is possible as a hale sculptress and a dafty pianist traveling together through life. The tough, under-standing, hefty broad and the wispy Joon take up a lot of time and exude tons of energy for unfathomable rea-sons. Jody Broad as Pamela does much with no lines at all. She's simply "sex."

Terence Kilburn directed with as much panache as possible.

Farmington Players neatly twist plot of mystery



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