



David McCallum (left) and Todd Waring both love a mystery, in "Deathtrap" at the Birmingham Theatre.

upcoming things to do

- **IN "DEATHTRAP"**
David McCallum stars in "Deathtrap," a thriller by Ira Levin, through Feb. 28 at the Birmingham Theatre, 211 S. Woodward, Birmingham. Curtain time is 8 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays, 7 p.m. Sundays, matinees at 2 on Saturdays-Sundays. Along with the Scottish actor, who portrays mystery writer Sidney Bruhl, the cast includes veteran performers Maggie Jackson as Bruhl's wife Myra; Susan Willis as psychic Helga ten Dorp; and Bob Horen as the lawyer. Tickets range from \$10-\$14 and are on sale at all CTC outlets or from the Birmingham Theatre box office at 644-3533.
- **"ASSIGNMENT BERLIN"**
The movie "Assignment Berlin," which was filmed in metropolitan Detroit, will have its world premiere Feb. 19 at Detroit's Masonic Temple. Tickets - for the black-tie optional event are \$35 each, with proceeds to benefit three Masonic charities. Following a champagne reception at 6:30 p.m., celebrities including the film's star Eddie Mekka (who plays Carmine on "Laverne and Shirley") will be introduced. The film will be shown, followed by an afterglow and cash bar. For ticket information call 832-3180.
- **"CRITIC'S CHOICE"**
The Avon Players production of "Critic's Choice," comedy by Ira Levin, goes into a third and final week-end, with performances at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday at the Avon Players theater, 1185 Washington Road, Avon Township. Tickets at \$4 may be reserved by calling 656-1130.
- **LAUGH TIME**
Ted Holum from the "Tonight" show is the attraction Friday-Saturday at Comedy Capers at Stafford's, Orchard Mall, Maple and Orchard Lake roads, West Bloomfield. Two shows are presented each night, at

'Corporate image' leads to laughter

Performances of the St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook production of "The Absence of a Cello," comedy by Ira Wallach, continue through Saturday at St. Dunstan's Theatre on Lone Pine Road, west of Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills. For further information or reservations, call 644-0527.

By Barbara Michals
special writer

Can an abstracted scientist adapt himself to the stringent demands of the corporate image? That's the question hilariously posed by St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook in its current production, "Absence of a Cello."

Andrew Pilgrim (Bill Everson) is a famous scientist, absent-minded about locating his glasses, paying his bills and filing his tax returns. Finding himself bankrupt and deeply in debt, he decides to try for a highly paid research position with a giant corporation.

The entire Pilgrim family pitches in to win over the company's interviewer, attempting to meet the corporation's expectations by disguising their individualism. Andrew's cello, for instance, marks him as an introvert, so it is stashed away and replaced with an all-but-forgotten television set.

Being bright and articulate, the Pilgrims quickly learn to play the corporate game. The deception nearly works until the Pilgrims find that surrendering their personal integrity is too high a price to pay.

EVERSON is thoroughly winning as Andrew, a round peg trying to accommodate himself to a square hole. With his expressive face and easy delivery, Everson wears the role as comfortably as Andrew's baggy old trousers.

Nancy Scott is a polished and likable Celia Pilgrim, Andrew's level-headed and understanding wife. A renowned medieval scholar, Celia has to hide her intellectual accomplishments to pose

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as the ideal corporate wife.

As Otis Clifton, the slogan-spouting company interviewer, Mark Wallers does a fine job. Seemingly the complete company man, Clifton's corporate cliché brings howl of recognition from the suburban audience.

Tom Christopher is perfect as Perry Littlewood, the bespectacled Wharton senior with a button-down mind. The grandson of the Pilgrims' neighbor, Perry becomes the family's advisor, coaching them in the corporate way of thinking. Perry knows a lot about interview techniques and pecking plans, but by play's end he has learned a lesson about life from Andrew.

Peppery Margery Brooks is a constant scene-stealer as Emma Littlewood, Perry's elderly grandmother. Emma uses her age as a license to act out, and she always has a choice comment to enliven the situation.

ELIZABETH BROOKS is aptly cool and sophisticated as Marian, Andrew's visiting sister. Marian and Otis are inexplicably attracted to each other, each a strong character who recognizes the other in the other.

Ms. Brooks also did the excellent costuming for the show and gets to wear some striking outfits.

Barbara Cliff is convincing as Joanna, the Pilgrims' college-student daughter. Though she's perfectly willing to aid in the family's deceptions, Joanna firmly rejects the corporate way of life for herself when she turns down Perry's attentions.

Director Florence Neal Brown has ably conveyed the wit and spirit of the play. Pacing is well-managed throughout. Tom Ankeny's set works well. Everything about St. Dunstan's "Absence of a Cello" is in tune.

Bob Allison narrates children's concert

Detroit radio and television personality Bob Allison will be featured with the Oakland University Concert Band in a free children's concert at 3 p.m. Sunday at Varner Recital Hall on campus near Rochester.

For the annual event, Allison will narrate Vincent Persichetti's "A Lincoln Address." The featured work is based on Lincoln's second inaugural address. The theme will be carried out in another concert work, "Variations on America" by Charles Ives.

"Procession of the Nobles" and "Polonaise," two rousing works by Rimsky-Korsakov, will close the program. The Russian pieces will receive a special arrangement by David Daniels.

The concert band is under the direction of James Dawson. Both Dawson and Daniels are faculty members in the OU Department of Music. Each year the band selects a number of works that have special appeal to young people. Following the concert, members of the audience will be invited to the stage to visit with the musicians.

BOB ALLISON resides in Bloomfield Village with his wife, Maggie, and his family. Allison recently celebrated 20 years of hosting "Ask Your Neighbor," metropolitan Detroit call-in show. "Ask Your Neighbor" is aired Mondays-Fridays from 9-11 a.m. on WDRB (1430AM) and WCAR (1050AM).



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