St. D's does comedy, Will-O-Way a musical

By Debi Baresmian

Will-O-Way Repertory Theatre offers an inter-esting production of a unique little musical called "Mack and Mable."

The musical, by Michael Stewart and Jerry Her-man, depicts the lives and times of two sitent movie greats, Mack Sennett and Mabel Normand. It pro-vides a look at the beginnings of film in America and gives some insight into the stresses of movie-making and movie stardom.

Sets and musical accompaniment in the Will-O-Way production are simple — almost stark. Elicen T. Weiss, as director, has chosen instead to rely on the talents and enthusiasm of the cast to communi-cate the energies required in the fledgling movie industry.

For the most part, this cast responds with gusto. The characters are well-rounded, and the talent is consistent throughout.

Many supporting characters sline. Pamela Cice-land as Lottie Ames is really likeable. She is a free-wheeling, uninhibited talent. Cleeland's enthusiasm

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'Charley's Aunt' 'Mack and Mabel' has real charm always amuses

Performances of the St. Dun-stan's Guild of Cranbrook produc-tion of "Charley's Aunt" by Brandon Thomas continue at 9 p.m. Friday-Saturday at the playhouse on Lone Pine Road in Bloomfield Hills. For reservations, call 644-2527.

By Barbara Michala

By Barbara Michala spocial writer

"Charley's Aunt," abily performed by St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook, is a sure cure for the midwinter blaba, a comic Valentine that never fails to be great iun, whether one is seeing this classic Victorian farce for the first that the seed of the classic Victorian farce for the first that the control of the control of the classic Victorian farce for the first that the control of the con

WALTERS HAS unabashed charm and the impish grin of a lovable rogue. He throws himself into the role with great gusto, and his comic timing is ex-

cellent.

As the love-smitten Jack and Charley, Flynn and McMechan are convincing and work well as a team. When the plot they have set in motion becomes more than they can handle, their growing distress visibly registers.

review

Armstrong is wonderful as bluster-ing old Spettigue, chasing Babberley around and around the garden, as he hobbies on a cane. His edit/ery carries great authority, and one can readily be-lieve how inflimidating he is to his nicee, his ward and their respective suitors.

nicce, als waru anu their respective suitors.

John Lake is likeable as Jack's father, Sir Francis Chesney, Though his current impecualous state makes him a contender for Donna Lucla's hand, Chesney's gentlemanily nature and basic good sense ultimately prevail.

When the real Donna Lucla shows up in the middle of the sheanilgans, she hides her identity, easily accomplished since Charley has never met his aunt. Lpe Rosender, always a commanding stage presence, is fine in the role, her bearing and elegance most credible.

bearing and elegance most creatise.

LOU SINGER is pleasant as Brasset, Jack's buller, who serves as a commentator on the behavior of his 'betters." A little more haughtiness would enhance the comic potential of the role, though. The three young ladies in the play tend to be insiple characters, and the casting here does nothing to counteract that impression. Helen Roberts as Kitty, Jack's love, comes closest to showing some spirit. Kim Dresbach's Amoring some spirit. Kim Dresbach's Amoring some spirit. Kim Dresbach's Amoring some spirit with the spirit plack-luster, while Deborah Walker as Ela, Babberley's true love, is cloyingly sugary.

Babberley's true tove, is curyingly sear-ary.

Director Dwight Rinke keeps the production lively and well paced. Sai-urday night's curtain problems not-withstanding. Robert Raisch's set de-sign is nicely flexible, though the black walls are somewhat shabibly painted. Corinne Barringer's costumes are ser-viceable, but the girls' dresses should not separate at the waist when they move. It's an amusing distraction in a show that has more than enough genu-ine laughs.

Performances of the Will-O-Way Repertory Tracter production of the musted "Mack and Mabel" continue at \$30 p.m. Friday-Satur-days and \$30 p.m. Sundays through March 10 aby and prentice Theatre, 775 W. Comp Loke Road, Bloomfield Township. For ticket information call 64-418. review

is contagious. Her one number, "Tap Your Troubles Away," is a show-stopper.

CHESTER E. Jamison III is another solid talent. He portrays a number of roles. Each character is well-developed and bollevable. His number, "When Mabel Comes in the Room," is a perfect vehicle for his beautiful voice and dancing ability.

Tom Chapman and Caz Badynee also perform with vigor. Chapman portrays a particularly like-able and three-dimensional character. It is uncommon that a cast can so strongly support the main character. This characteristic is the production's particular attribute.

The main characters, Mabel and Mack, are por-trayed by Cynthia Belley and Marc Jarchow, They bellevably portray a vulnerable startes and an overbearing movie mogul. Their best scene is the one in which they sing to each other, "I Won't Send Roses," It is a sensitive interpretation of a poignant

The choreography in this musical is really quite good. It is creative and within the ability of all the chorus members. It is most pleasing during the number "When Mable Comes in the Room." The cast dances with style and confidence.

There is an effective use of a spotlight through-

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out this production. It isolates characters during private thoughts and while communicating directly with the audience. The use of the spot in the final scene is really a nice touch.

EILEEN WEISS has a good understanding of the Intent of this mustcal. The play incorporates historical information with real-life drama and entertaining fluff. Weiss has insured that each element is effectively communicated.

To see this play's to see a cast thoroughly enjoying listelf while at the same time working very hard to present a finished product.



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