



Barbara Michals

Bedroom farce is stylishly done

Performances of "Move Over, Mrs. Markham" continue at 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 24-25, at the Birmingham Village Players playhouse in Birmingham. For ticket information, call 644-2075 anytime.

By Barbara Michals
Special writer

"Who's been sleeping in my bed?" might well be the subtitle for "Move Over, Mrs. Markham," the British sex farce currently being performed with great panache by the Birmingham Village Players.

A fine cast and a marked sense of style make "Mrs. Markham" a pleasant comic romp.

In a plot reminiscent of "The Apartment," stodgy book publisher Philip Markham and his wife Joanna (Jerry McKeon and Diane D'Agostino) find their London flat in great demand.

Their close friends Henry and Linda Lodge (John Schmidt and Diane Evans-Forrest) want to borrow the flat for their respective extramarital liaisons, while their decorator (Brian Cloutier) plans a rendezvous with the housekeeper (Ronnice Higgs). Unfortunately, all are counting on the same night.

When Philip decides to spurn a dinner party and spend a quiet evening at home, everyone's clandestine plans are thrown awry. A mislaid page of a letter sets the mayhem in motion, and soon people are peeping in out of bed, bathroom and pantry.

Ivan Bloch's shows may earn the Tonys

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got wonderful reviews, but it just wasn't ready for New York," Bloch said. "We couldn't get it to work right. I think the principal character was a problem."

WORKING WITH author Garson Kanin, Bloch meets the author and his actress wife Ruth Gordon for lunch once a week in New York. "It's probably the most fun I have in the theater business," he said.

In his movie endeavors, Bloch produced "The Stone Boy, starring Robert Duval and Glenn Close, which was released last year. "It just came out in tape," he noted. Current film projects are "Night on the Town" for the Disney studio and "The Color War."

Musicals in the works include "Wind-up City" based on the classic drama "Front Page," and "Car of the Movies," about the film business from silents to talkies. Another musical he is producing is "Carrie," based on the movie. "We came to me with this piece," he said. "I'm looking for a di-

D'AGOSTINO is wonderfully unflappable as Joanna, keeping her British cool while trying to assuage a jealous husband, protect her best friend and pacify an important publishing client.

McKeon is the least successful at affecting a British accent, but he is so well-cast as Philip that the lapse is easily forgiven. McKeon makes Philip's injured pride and outrage highly believable, and he is quite hilarious posing as his own butler.

As Linda, Evans-Forrest is bubbly and frivolous, while Schmidt effectively portrays Henry as a likeable rogue.

Cloutier is amusingly arch as All-star Spewlow, the Markham's interior decorator of questionable sexual preference. As the German housekeeper Sylvia, Higgs has overstylized both her accent and delivery.

Barbara Underwood is perfect as the visiting authoress, a rustic straight-laced spinster totally wrapped up in her beloved dogs.

In small roles, James Masters is delightful as the dapper guest in the bowler hat, Linda's very dignified suitor, while Mary Lou Johnstone is fine as the hotel's discreet manager.

Director William Haycock keeps the action moving smoothly and comic timing well-tuned. A silly line like "Go to Hell-ga" comes off terribly funny with the right timing.

Ami's child's set design is attractive and serviceable, with the painted "wood paneling" in the background an imaginative touch.

rector now."

Bloch has talked to Robin Williams about starring in a play called "The Nerd," but the project has been delayed and will not open in the coming season. Bloch also is looking at a play directed by George C. Scott with Ben Gazzara.

Has Bloch had any flops? "Requiem for a Heavyweight" was projected as a Broadway hit this season, but the show didn't go. Bloch had thought it might be more successful than some of his other shows because of its well-known story and a cast with big stars.

"JOHN LITHGOW was up for best featured actor," he said. When the play closed, Bloch recalls, with a smile, "I thought there goes my record. I felt sorry for Lithgow but not for myself. I had three other plays running on Broadway."

Even though this businessman/producer spends more and more of his time in New York, he thinks of himself as a Detroitier. "I go to a party there. I still feel I'm from Detroit, Michigan. Unfortunately, they don't have the image of Detroit they should have."

upcoming things to do

- **ARETHA FRANKLIN**
Gov. James Blanchard has proclaimed Thursday, May 23, as Aretha Franklin Appreciation Day. The honoree comes after 25 years of performing for Franklin, who is a Bloomfield Hills resident. The "Queen of Soul" has garnered 14 gold records, 11 Grammy Awards and four American Music Awards, including one in 1974 for Favorite Female Soul Vocalist. Franklin made her debut as a singer at New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit, where her father, the late Rev. C.L. Franklin, was pastor.
- **OPEN-AIR SHOW**
The musical "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" will be presented by St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook at 9 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 31 to June 1, and Friday-Sunday, June 6-8, at the Greek Theatre at Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills. For tickets at \$5 for adults, \$3 for students, call 844-0527 anytime.
- **PJAZZ CONCERTS**
Brazilian jazz stars Flora Purim and Airtio Moreira will open the 14th season of outdoor PJazz concerts Wednesday, June 5 at the poolside terrace of the Hotel Pontchartrain in downtown Detroit. The weekly Monday and Wednesday concert series begins at 6 or 6:30 p.m. and runs through Aug. 26. Friday night concerts, featuring Canadian flutist Alexander Zonjic and his Quintet, will be added during July.

- **HIGHLAND TATTOO**
The 50th anniversary Highland Tattoo will be presented by the Royal Canadian Legion, Post 84, of Royal Oak, at 8 p.m. Saturday, June 1, at Kinnell High School gym in Royal Oak. Featured will be Birmingham's Celtic Pipes and Drums, the Windsor Police Band, the Flint Scottish Pipe Band, the Kinkardine Pipe Band, the Dondero High School Band and the Plymouth Flies and Drums. For tickets at \$4 general admission, \$1 for children under 12, call 541-9474.
- **NEW CENTER**
Two free, outdoor concert series will be offered beginning next week at New Center Park in Detroit. "Wednesdays in the Park," from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., presents Oldies with the Larados, May 29. "New Center Swings," from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursdays, begins with Alexander Zonjic, May 30. Other artists performing this summer range from the Sun Messengers to the Detroit Police Department's Blue Pigs. Wednesday concerts have a rain date for the following day. The series runs through Sept. 12.

- **FAMINE RELIEF**
Music by Arts Musica, Ann Arbor's classical early musical ensemble, and by Paul Vornberger's All-Star Jazz Ensemble will be featured at a benefit to assist victims of the African famine Thursday, May 23, at the Nectarine Ballroom in Ann Arbor. Tickets at \$25 include a "Festival of Wine, Food and Music," from 7:10 p.m. Tickets are available at the Michigan Theater Box Office, the Gandy Dancer and Renaissance in Ann Arbor. Proceeds will be sent to the USA for Africa committee in Los Angeles.

table talk

Lark's chef takes Michigan Meal honors

A prize-winning four-course dinner, priced at \$30, is being served through Saturday, during Michigan Week, at the Lark restaurant in West Bloomfield. The dinner menu was created by the Lark's chef, Brian Polcyn, 25, who won first prize and \$500 for himself in the All-Michigan Meal Contest conducted by the Michigan Restaurant Association, the Greater Michigan Foundation and AAA Michigan. Polcyn's award-winner includes soup of morel mushrooms, white beans and vegetables, asparagus natural, blackened pork chop with Poston potato pancake and apple and wild leek chutney, and a black walnut and cherry meringue torte with chocolate sauce. Chef Harlan W. Peterson at the Tapawingo in Ellsworth received honorable mention. Other finalists were from the Howe Inn in Ellsworth, Machus Red Fox in Birmingham and C.A. Muer Corp. in Detroit. Several hundred restaurants in the state are serving some form of an All-Michigan Meal during Michigan Week.

Chef's Fest

A wine tasting, with champagne, white zinfandel, kabinett and reds adds to the luncheon specialties from Birmingham-Bloomfield area restaurants served at the Chef's Fest from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday at the Community House in Birmingham. For further information about the event, which is always a sell-out, call 644-1700.

Wine seminar

Area wine connoisseurs gathered Sunday for a wine tasting and seminar hosted by the restaurant. The event is a prelude to the fourth annual wine auction sponsored by the Detroit International Wine Auction Committee on Saturday, Oct. 12, to benefit the Detroit Community Music School. Some 100 wine experts sampled award-winning wines from the Clos Du Bois Vineyards.

— Ethel Simmons



Brian Polcyn, chef at the Lark restaurant, won first prize with his four-course meal using

Michigan products for the soup, vegetable, entree and dessert.

Festival featuring bluegrass


Radio station WDET's sixth annual Motor City Bluegrass Festival will be held from noon to 7 p.m. Saturday, June 1, at the Meadow Brook Music Festival site on the Oakland University campus in Rochester.

Headliners are Peter Rowan, who penned the '70s hit "Panama Red," and Mark O'Connor who was a child bluegrass prodigy. Other groups appearing at the festival include Joel Mabus, Dana Cupp and the Detroit Bluegrass Band, the Balduek Mountain Ramblers, and Roy McGinnis and the Sunnysiders. For the last five years, the festival was held a week earlier, on Memorial Day weekend.

Tickets are \$7 in advance, \$10 at the gate, with children 12 and under free. Tickets are available at several local outlets, Musical Oasis in Birmingham and the Rochester Folk Workshop in

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