

Avon Players briskly performs British farce

Performances of the Avon Players production of "Move Over, Mrs. Markham" by Ray Cooney and John Chapman continue through Saturday, Oct. 11, at the theater in Rochester Hills. For ticket information, call the box office at 656-1130.

By Frank Hursley
special writer

Avon Players of Rochester Hills has launched its 39th season with a smart production of the British farce, "Move Over, Mrs. Markham." The result is community theater at its most ambitious and at its finest. The players romp briskly through the varied antics and drollery that derives from complex but ludicrous situations, extracting the utmost in devilish humor.

Playwrights Ray Cooney and John Chapman have instilled enough jumbled elements to ensure exciting farce. Their characters struggle toward romantic pairings, but the traditional chance encounters, misinterpreted dialogue and bizarre happenings are neatly parlayed into obstacles designed to assure no one achieves their desired tryst. The ingredients jell into outrageous, thoroughly enjoyable theater. Considering the players' total effort, Joyce Contract's direction garnered all of these elements. Although there are brief moments when command of the material eludes the players, the pace is crisp,

lively, and the production comes over as thrashing good comments on the silly embarrassments humans entrap themselves with.

BECKY MCINTYRE plays Joanne Markham as if the role was created for her. Deliciously funny, Mrs. Markham is the malnourished around which knotty intrigues revolve, leading into such multiple directions that it is amazing that everything unravels before daybreak.

Philip Markham, a staid business type whose energies are sapped more by his office routine than by the boudoir, is played effectively by

Jerry Anderson.

A vigorous contribution to the production's excellence is Edward Duke's hilarious portrayal of All-star, an interior decorator, employed to revamp the Markham's London flat.

Sydne Kalet is a vivacious Linda, and Fred Shulak is Henry. They play a husband-and-wife team with designs in other directions. Sheila Lyle portrays Olive Harriet, an overbearing children's book writer.

Bill Doehring and George Kozak have conceived a pleasantly detailed set depicting the Markham's flat.

Concert benefits retarded

Itzak Perlman, world renowned violinist, is expected to draw more than 2,000 guests at his violin performance to benefit the Jewish Association for Retarded Citizens (JARC).

The concert is scheduled for 8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20, at Ford Auditorium and may be more than \$4,000 to support the homes and services for mentally retarded that are sponsored by JARC.

Perlman has appeared with every major orchestra in the world, on most of the great concert stages, on countless national television shows, and in recording studios here and abroad.

He was awarded the Medal of Liberty by President Reagan during the Statue of Liberty's 100th birthday celebration in New York this summer.

Perlman also holds numerous Grammy Awards for his recordings.

JARC is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization that operates group homes and provides services for mentally retarded persons in the metro area.

Presently, there are 10 JARC Haverim (friendship) Homes located

in Southfield, Oak Park, Franklin, Pleasant Ridge, Hazelington, West Bloomfield and Beverly Hills. Tickets for the Oct. 20 benefit are priced from \$50. For information call JARC at 557-7650.

Itzak Perlman

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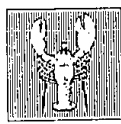
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