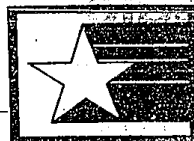


Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



Thursday, April 13, 1989 O&E

(O7C)



Baby Animal poses with Bill Prady of Birmingham, who wrote the show "Where's Animal?" that will be on stage Tuesday through Sunday, April 23, at the Fox Theatre in Detroit.

Scripts bring out 'the child inside'

By Cathie Breidenbach
staff writer

When the Muppet Babies come to town next week in the musical "Where's Animal?" Bill Prady, writer for the show, will visit his parents in Birmingham and take them to see the Muppets playing at the Fox Theatre.

For the last four years, he has been writing scripts for Jim Henson's crew of colorful Muppet characters. In a phone interview from California, Prady quipped that he is good at writing for kids because "I'm immature. It seems to be a penibility I'm plugged into. I write for the child inside of me."

"I grew up watching Kermit," says the 26-year-old Prady, who went to school at Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills and was raised in Oak Park, Southfield and Birmingham.

Kermit the Frog, the indomitable Miss Piggy and their lovable friends spark the imaginations of TV-era children as much as Pooh, Eeyore and Raggedy Ann thrilled earlier generations. Since he was a

kid, Prady has been rooting for Kermit. Now he writes for Kermit and the gang.

THE SHOW "Where's Animal?" spins off from "Muppet Babies," the Saturday morning TV adventures of the Muppets when they were young. It stars Animal, the electric-haired, wild-man drummer — when he was a fuzzy, rambunctious tyke riding his Big Wheel.

Prady explains the theory behind the madcap Muppet plots. "Muppet Babies can go anywhere through the power of imagination and we (writers) get to think up wonderful places they can go. We teach kids to use imagination as a problem-solving and learning tool."

In "Where's Animal?" the Muppet Babies play hide and seek and Animal hides with such ingenuity that none of his friends can find him. The show encourages children in the audience to get involved in the hunt because the characters on stage can't find Animal, but the audience knows his hiding place.

Please turn to Page 8

She's a mother Actress relates to role as Kate

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

CAROL HARRIS can identify closely with the role she plays, as the housewife-mother in Neil Simon's "Broadway Bound" at the Birmingham Theatre.

"Everybody brings to a role who they are," said the attractive, dark-haired actress, during a backstage interview one afternoon last week. "I'm a mother. I have three daughters."

Describing the character Kate, she said, "She is very stern as a mother. She thinks she knows best for everybody."

Harris understudied Joan Rivers on Broadway, in the role of Kate, and also understudied the role of Kate's sister, Blanche. She did two performances when Rivers was out. Before the Broadway production, Harris was in the national tour of "Broadway Bound." She understudied Carol Shelley as Kate and did one performance, in Chicago, when the star was sick.

"I consider myself a loving person," she said, pointing out one element she believes adds to her portrayal of Kate. Linda Lavin created the pivotal role of Kate in the original Broadway production. "I thought she was very warm in the role," Harris said.

"Broadway Bound" continues a five-week run through Sunday, May 7, at the Birmingham. The show is directed by Peter Lawrence, who directed the comedy "Social Security," which was held over there last season.

THIRD PLAY in Simon's semi-autobiographical trilogy about the Jerome family, "Broadway Bound" takes up where "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Biloxi Blues" (both plays had long runs at the Birmingham) left off. "It's the same family 10 years later," Harris said.

The most poignant and talked-about scene in the play is the one where Kate "tells about the night she danced with George Raft. We get to see her as a young girl, before life affected her so harshly."

In an intimate moment, Kate and her young son, Eugene (Peter Birkenhead), dance to "It Had to Be You," playing on the radio.

Harris said the dance she shares with Eugene is based on the Castle Walk, which was popular in 1915-16, when Kate would have danced with



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Carol Harris, who began her performing career at 4, gave it up willingly to raise her family of three daughters. Since her return to the stage, she has understudied for "Broadway Bound"

on Broadway and on the national tour. Now she is starring as Kate, mother of Eugene Jerome, in the Birmingham Theatre production.

Raft "35 years ago." "Broadway Bound" is set in 1949.

It wasn't difficult for her to do the dance scene. "I started in the business as a dancer," she pointed out. "Peter (the director) and I kind of worked it out."

She said that as a teenager, she danced with a chorus line of 18 girls — the Gae Foster Roxettes — at state fair grandstands all over the country.

Harris was born in Long Island and started in show business at the age of 4.

SHE SAID her parents always took her and her older sister to the ballet and theater when they were children.

She sang and danced, working summers. After she started with the Roxettes, she found the business difficult. Harris got married, had three daughters and was happy to be at home raising them.

"I missed an outlet for my

creativity," she said, explaining why she and a friend started a children's theater, the Musical Players Theatre, on Long Island. It ran for 10 years, when her children were growing up.

She started studying acting again and did commercials, including one for Ragú Spaghetti Sauce that ran four years on television. Although she is Russian and Lithuanian, "I look very Italian, especially on camera," Harris said.

She did showcases, "small things to get experience. There are a lot of off-off-Broadway theaters in Manhattan." Harris and her husband, director Michael Mannes, live in Manhattan where she teaches at the Circle in the Square Theatre School. She conducts the musical interpretation class, telling how to sell a song as an actor.

Harris and her husband have written a screenplay about coming of age in the Bronx "in what is basically a ghetto." Mannes grew up in the

South Bronx in the late 1950-60s.

THE COUPLE is raising money for a film of their screenplay. "There's a part for me, of the boy's mother — another Jewish mother," she said with a smile.

Harris also is writing a stage play, about growing older. The main character is a woman whose career depends on her staying in her 40s. Using a serum for test animals, "She stays the same and her husband gets older... Inwardly you age anyway."

Harris' wardrobe for "Broadway Bound" was hanging on a rack in her dressing room. "She has two house dresses, and the blue and white dress for the George Raft dance," the actress said.

Playing the role of a simple housewife from Brighton Beach, "I don't have to wear any makeup. They gray my hair. I can relax. The costumes are very comfortable."

SAVE 20% FLY AIR CANADA

JULY 8-25 NORWAY, SWEDEN & DENMARK

Includes spectacular fjords - 4 cruises
all breakfasts - 14 suppers - city tours.
Double occupancy - limited to 40

\$3035 Per Person U.S. Dollars \$3795 Per Person Can. Dollars

Call our Detroit Phone Number 964-5222

Frank Wansbrough's Plaza Travel - Windsor - Ontario

NOW TWO LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!!

ROCHESTER HILLS: OCEANIA INN

MEADOWBROOK VILLAGE MALL

68 N. ADAMS

PH: 375-9200

CORNER WALTON & ADAMS

WEST BLOOMFIELD: THE FANDA

DRAKE SUMMIT SHOPPING CENTER

5586 DRAKE RD.

PH: 641-1503

CORNER WALTON LAKE RD.

FOR A TRULY ELEGANT EVENING OF DINING, LET US SERVE YOU WITH OUR CUISINE AND SERVICE. SERVING: CANTONESE, Szechuen (HOT & SPICY), EXOTIC DISHES & COCKTAILS.

CANADIAN EMPRESS

(May to November departures)

Spectacular Scenery • Historic Sites • The famous International Seaway

UNIQUE • ELEGANT • FRIENDLY

PRIVATE AIR-CONDITIONED STATEROOMS

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER CRUISING

on a 32 stateroom REPLICA STEAMSHIP

DIAL-A-BROCHURE: 1-800-367-7668 toll free

ST. LAWRENCE CRUISE LINES INC.

253 Ontario St., Kingston, Ont., Canada K7L 2T4

Buddy's PIZZA

Miscreant Soup and the #1 Rated Pizza in town!

Let Us Help You **SAVORALLY** ENJOY KEBAB! DONORS All You-Can-Eat Packages 649-3550

Call ahead and we'll have it ready!

FARMINGTON 31607 Plymouth Rd. 31644 Northampton Hwy. (at the intersection of 31644) 851-4600

Other Buddy Locations **CARRY OUT ONLY**

WATERFORD 6750 Highland Rd. (at 316) 649-3656

ROYAL OAK 4246 N. Woodward (at the corner of 4246) 649-8000

Bring this ad in for...

\$2 Off Any Large Pizza or Large Antipasto or Large Greek Salad

O&E Sports—more than just the scores

Hampton Inn

Southfield's Best Kept Secret Hampton Inn

\$390* Get-A-Way Weekend

Enjoy 153 Deluxe Guest Rooms • Complimentary Breakfast Bar • Large Indoor Pool • Whirlpool • Complete Fitness Room • In Room Movies • Pay Movies • Plus Service With A Smile.

CALL 356-5500

27500 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield (Just East of Telegraph Rd.)

*Per night plus tax. Advance Reservations Necessary. Fri., Sat. & Sun. Only, based upon availability. Present Ad upon check in. Individual Reservations only. Expires June 26, 1989

DINING EXCELLENCE • SUPREME CATERING

Cacques

Business Lunches
The perfect place to make business an enjoyable experience

Elegant Dinners
Continental cuisine, fine wines, beautiful atmosphere and wonderful service... the choice ingredients for a gracious evening
Reservations Accepted
642-3131

Complete Catering
• Bar Mitzvahs • Weddings
• Showers • Anniversaries
• Bar Mitzvahs • Birthdays
SEE OUR BEAUTIFUL OUTDOOR ATRIUM
Call DONNA ROSEN 642-8890

30100 Telegraph in Bingham Farms Office Plaza, Bt. 12 & 13

JOVAN

Now Appearing **DENNY McLAIN**
FORMER DETROIT TIGER PITCHING GREAT
On Keyboard
Mondays thru Fridays

Ask About Our Excellent Catering Facilities

Luncheon 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dinner 5 p.m.-11 p.m.
Friday & Sunday 'til midnight
Cocktails 'til 2 a.m.

Reservations accepted 642-0055