'Midsummer Night's Dream' eye-appealing

Performances of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" continue through Sunday at Varner Studio Theatre at Oakland University in Rochester Hills and through Thursday, May 25, at the Wallace Smith Theatre at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills, For ticket information call O'Is Center for the Arts box office at 370-3013 or the Smith Theatre box office at 471-7700.

From the versalile set, subtly so-ductive lighting, color-synchronized costumes and rambunctious staging, director T. Andrew Aston's produc-tion of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is a visual pleasure. Oakland University's Center for the Arts Joins with Oakland Commu-

Cathie Breidenbach

love it has preasing joint presenta-tion.

Devotes of Shakespeare some-times revel in his language to such a degree that reverence for his famous words dominates the play and hob-bles the movement of the plot. Not

of the inventors of the policy is on this production.

If anything, visual pleasures and energetic pacing seduce audience attention away from words. Occasion-

nliy College to celebrate imagina-tion and the convoluted course of love in this pleasing joint presenta-tion.

al haphazard articulation by players makes catching every syllable diffi-cult, which adds to the subjugation of language to action.

DEBBIE DOM plays the petite Rermla as a feisty bundle. She, and Amy Kildow as Helena are a comely pair worthy of the love of Lysander, and Demetrius. Tall Lysander, played by Scott Crawford, looks like a young heart-throb with his blood curls, but Scott Berry as Demetrius

king than a linely tover.

Hermin's daddy may prefer
Demetrius as sultor for his daughter,
but if yess beguile the heart, it's no
wonder Demetrius doesn't stand a
chance without a bit of fairy dust to
help love along. Harry Carlson as
Hermin's domineering daddy looks
and younds the part of an exasperated byrent.

ed parent.
The four lovers play their tangled affections with skill, and in one free-for-all scene, they outdo themselves with splendid slapstick anties that fit Puck's observation, "What fools these mortals be."
Lysander tucks Hermia under his arm and earlies her accound while

the angry spitfire at arm's length while Hermia quivers to get at heronce-dear friend. Vigorous theater, foul of delight.

Designer Susan Barrett deserves double praise for a set that not only captures the ethereal palette and delicate lighting of the fairter woodland world but is simple enough to move easily from Oakland University's Varner Theatre to Oakland Community College's Wallace Smith Theatre where the play will also be presented.

LIGHTS PROJECT motited leafy designs on elongated hancers arapended from the ceiling to create an impressionistic forest as simple as it is effective. Except for a peach light that throbs when Oberon's pollous are working their magic, the lighting succeeds through subtlety. That high tech light befits a glimmicky science fiction set better than the fairy world, but to quibble about a detail so small as a throbbing light is to nit-pick a production that is otherwise a visual delight.

Jerry Rathgeb as Bottom strikes a happy balance between being an egotistical jerk and a dear, humbling crude, percine gestures some actors bring to the role. A ham he pulls off splendidly, but he plays a Bottom to civilized to fairly be called piggish. His sidekicks, Morris Weinner as Peter Quince, Michael Curtiss as Peter Quince, Mic



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mor traditional for the rights.

Travy Wade makes-a-fine, light-footed Pract with an auconyentional blue belty button. The most memorable thing about the fairly king and queen (fadew a John Young and the property of the pr

Cathic Breidenbach of West Bloomfield teaches college writ-ing classes and works as a freelance writer.

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Musical 'Cabaret' a slick show

Performances of the Avon Players production of "Cabaret" continue through Saturday, May 27, at the theater in Rochester Hills. For ticket information, call the box office at 656-1130.

"Cabaret" has a smashing script and the Avon Players does justice to the lean, musical version of John Van Druten's play, written by Joe Masteroff.

Masteroil captures the spirit of wild, chic decadence many of the German painters of pre-World War II Berlin caught on their canvases. The Avon Players intelligently recreates the mood of the original stories by Christopher Isberwood, which are set in a Berlin on a verge of destruction.

or destruction.

Jeff Upchurch does a splendid job
as the sardonic Master of Ceremonice. He is both jublinat and restrained, playing the sophisticated,
lewd MC who introduces the acts at
the Kit Kat Club, and by extension,
tells us about the stages Germany
sinks into on the way to Fascism.

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A lifted eyebrow on the face of

Maril Billian 1000

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this gifted actor gives the audience a world of information. Upchurch manges to Imbue this demanding role with his own brand of wit.

SHEILA LYLE is Fraulein Schneider, the landlady who loves writers. Lyle is a resigned Mother Courage, a Brechtian survivor. She sensitively portrays a Schneider who will survive WWII, but at temendous

will survive WWII, but at temenous loss.
When she sings "A Pineapple for Me," she is a happy matron who has found love. When she returns the crystal bowl and calls off her impending marrige, we know that her generous heart has frozen.
Fred Shulak is touching as Herr Schultz, the elderly, Jewsh sultor who thinks nothing can happen to

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marringe.

Shulak gives us a Schultz who is too old to flee while there's still

time.

Stephanie Nichols is believable as
Fraulein Kost, the blowsy whore
who knows all the sallors in town.
Nichols is husty, practical, a woman
who can't tell one sailor from another, a whore who is a sign of the
times.

TOM SMITH does an equally fine job as Ernet Ludwig, the genial Natiwho makes trips to Paris to collect money for the Party. Smith alides from geniality to uglines in a swift, final sector at the nightchb.

Kim Monteropo as Clifford Bradchaw, the earnest writer, opens his heart to Berlin and its people. He cells his girl, Sally Bowles, "every-

his heart to Berlin and its people, he tells his girl, Sally Bowles, "every-thing's so tacky and terrible, it's wonderful."

What Nazism is about is slow to

dawn on Bradshaw, but when it does, he rises to the occasion. Refusing to run errands for the Nazis, he is beaten up. He understands "Mein Kampf," unlike the spollitical Sally. When his girl has an abortlon because she wants to work at the inghetich, he boys a ticket home, understanding that the end of the world because the wants to work at the inghetich, he boys a ticket home, understanding that the end of the world because the boys at the standing that the near the boys at the standing that the near the boys at the

Helen Zucker has many years experience reviewing for news-papers and magazines in Michi-gan, New York and Massachu-







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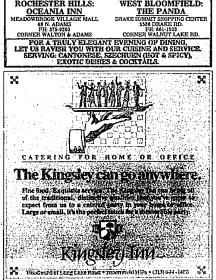
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