

Bredius glows in 'BarbaraSong'

2-piano act leads to successful show

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number. You will want to send flowers to your mother after you hear it.

Carole King's "Natural Woman" is a proud celebration of love, and Rupert Holmes' "Wages of Sin" provides humorous tribute to all those "good women of ill repute." Michael Peter Smith's breathtakingly eerie "Crazy Mary" is a memorable exploration of loneliness and isolation.

THE SHOW is also interspersed with some original humor, the best being "Cream Cheese Dips," an ode to fattening food which borrows its melody from the Beatles' "Yesterday."

The audience should relate to this song about fine cuisine, having just finished an outstanding meal upstairs at Sebastian's. The dinner theater menu offers a wide choice of entrees including whitefish, turkey, scallops, beef tenderloin and chicken. Meals are prepared with a light, original and flavorful touch. The bread basket is easily the best in town. Salads and desserts offer unusual treats.

Bredius, one of the Detroit-area's best known female vocalists, presents the songs with authority and flair.



Barbara Bredius

In this time of spiraling entertainment costs, "BarbaraSong" is also a bargain. One could reasonably expect to drop the \$29.50 cost of a ticket on the dinner alone, and then go to the show for an additional \$29. Instead, a full evening of fine dining and classy entertainment is included for under \$30 (excluding tips and drinks). This would be a great way to impress a date.

Mark S. Curley is active in local community theater, both on stage and behind the scenes. He is a member of the Ridgedale Players in Troy.

Dallas, the show was in its final form. They had rehearsed it up, but were told they needed 15 minutes more, so they added a number where the symphony members do the hok-y-poke, and the audience joins in. "It became our signature thing," Hardwick said.

Craver hesitated when asked what it is about the show that makes it special to the audiences, and tossed the question to Hardwick, who said that most people can identify with it because it's about a small community with a music teacher.

Each night, a woman in the audience is selected to be Miss Reeves, the music teacher honored. The recipient has run the gamut, from a young woman to someone in her 80s. "People always think she's a plant," Craver said.

After the show the cast serves punch and cookie in the lobby, another homey touch for the show that has aspects of a performance by Lawrence Welk and friends.

BOTH HARDWICK and Craver are from the South (Craver says, "There's a Southern Mafia in the theater in New York"). Hardwick grew up in East Texas, where he first performed at a Halloween carnival at age 7, playing the song "Down Town." Craver, who is from Lexington,

What was the reaction in their home towns? "They loved us," Craver said cheerfully.

N.C., said his first professional performance was playing piano for a school assembly in the fifth grade. The two men share an apartment in Brooklyn. Last year they did a small film score for a movie, "Sapphire Man," not yet released. This fall they put together a trio band, which played in 12 states down south and in their home towns.

What was the reaction in their home towns? "They loved us," Craver said cheerfully.

When "Oil City" ran in New York, the off-Broadway house seated 300. By contrast, the Birmingham Theatre has 1,100 seats, and Hardwick and Craver view this as a huge theater. Although they've been involved with the show since 1986, and starred in its entire one-year, nine-month run in New York, they both still get nervous before going on-stage each night.



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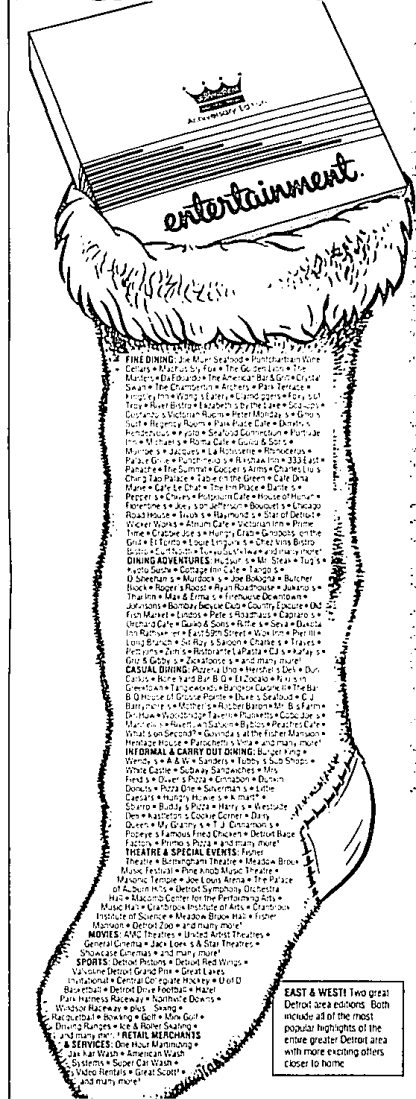
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Mark Hardwick

Mike Craver

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