Fantasy breathes life into two romances

Performances of "Romance, Romance" continue through Sun-day, Murch 18, at the Birming-ham Theatre, For licket informa-tion call the box office at 644-3533.

Double your pleasure with a double dose of romance in the firming-ham Theatre production of the delightful twin musicals "Tomance. Romance." The two separate one-act plays share the same excellent four-niember cast, and both are dedicated to the proposition that fantasy is a strong aid to romance.

The opening musical, set in Vienna.

The opening musical, set in Vienna at the turn of the century, is like a Viennese cream pastry — not much substance, but absolutely delicious.

Both Noone and Mitzman have wonderful voices and give their respective characters loads of charm and vitality.

Peter Noone and Marcia Mitzman play aristocrats who become bored with the high life of their class and pose as working class folk to seek true love. By chance they find each other, but they also discover that the charms of poverty fade quickly.

Both the story and the musical numbers are very suggestive of old-fashined operetias, a point clearly made by Noone's character at the end. Barry Harman's lyries range

from funny ("Goodbye, Emil," "A Rustic Country Inn") to Joyous (Til Always Remember the Song," "Yes, It's Love"), to poignant ("The Night It Had to End"), to go with Keith Hermann's very melodic, hummable

Hermann's very melodic, hummable music.

Both Noone and Mitzman have wonderful volces and give their respective characters loods of charant value, Mitzman looks gorgeous in Steven Jones' luscheus Arnouveau gowns, and Noone retains the visy supposed of "Hermann's herman work of the work of the

THE LEADS are ably supported by Sheri Cowart and John DeLuca as graceful waltzers who parallel the main lovers in pantomime. They also

double as other minor characters.

In the second musical two modern couples share a summer rental home in the Hamptons. Barb and Lenny (Mitzman and DeLuca) and Monica and Sam (Cowart and Noone) are all close friends, both couples happily married for a long time. Barb and Sam who have stayed best friends since college, now discover a new traction to each other. The play asks if a man and woman can really stay platonic friends, or is the fantasy of wondering about a love affair even better than the reality:

Here Coward and DeLuca get to display their fine vocal skills in larger parts, while Mitzman and Noone have a chance to bring more depth to their roles.

Musical numbers range from soft

Musical numbers range from soft rock (a reprise of the previous act's



Barbara **Michals**

"It's Not Too Late" that takes on a different meaning) to pleasing bal-lads ("Words He Doesn't Say." "Moonlight Passing Through a Win-dow.") It's ironic when Noone's character briefly pretends to be a rock

acter briefly pretends to be a rock star.

In addition to writing the lyrics and the book for both the musicals, Harman also directs this production, as he did the original Broadway one. The results are every bit as pleasing, Steven Rubin's fine sets and Pamela

Sousa's very good choreography are also identical to their Broadway ori-ginals.

Valentine's Day may be past, but it's never too late to enjoy "Ro-mance, Romance."

Barbara Michals teaches high school English in Southfield. A theater critic for the last 15 years, she is an invetterate playpeer who regularly catches up on all the New York productions.





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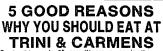
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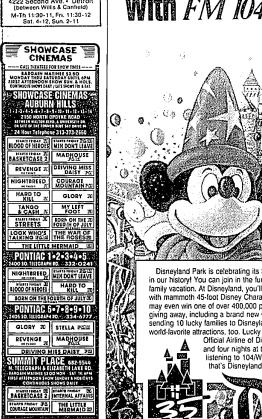
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