Entertainment





Barbara Michals

'Nunsense' is just heavenly

Jornatium, cull the bax office at 644-3533.

As one of its songs proclaims, "Nunsense" is indeed habit forming, for it is every bit as juyously funny the third time I viewed it as the previous times. The current production at the Birminghafa Theatre is still a happy mix of outrageous puns, spirited tunes and appealing performances that add up to drule fut limitest of plots surcounds Dan Goggin's wonderful music and bytes. When 52 mus of their order succumb to botulism (from a new soup recipe by Sister Julia, Child of God), the Little Sisters of Hoboken (also know as the "Little Hobos") have only enough money to bury 48.

Thus they stage a talent show in the auditorium of their Mt. Saint Relen's School to "clean out the freezer" and defrest the remaining four, "blue nuns."

four "blue nuns."

The nuns frequently circulate among the audience, harassing latecomers, admonishing people to sit up straight, administering a quiz on a "lesson" and generally receating a parochial school atmosphere with good-natured humor, one nun, clearly an astute judge of character, warned my companion, "I'm watching you. You look like a trouble-maker!"

BECAUSE THE role was literally written for her by author Goggin. Martlyn Farina is the consumate Sister Mary Cardelia, the Mother Superior who constantly admonishes her friviolous subordinates to maintain proper decorum but loves to kick up her own heels. Despite the innate haughtiness that goes with her title, Mother Superior is no shrinking violet when she belts out "Turn Up the Spotlight" and "Just a Couple of Sisters" and joins the chorus of several other rousing numbers.

Winter

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DANCING

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Farina is at her most hilarious when she achieves a sexual high atfer curiously smiffing at a bottle of "Rush" discovered in the girls ocker room. "Must be something for people in a harry," she quips.

Alvaeta Cuess is deligibile as the bort, the trainer of noviliates and "number two" nun who always tries harder to usurp Mother Superior's authority. With her mischevious eyes and sauey delivery. Guess is a guaranteed seene-stealer, not an easy feat among this talented company. Her powerful voice adds Juster to "The Biggest Ain't the Best," "Just a Couple of Sisters" and the hand-clapping gospel "Holler Than Thou."

Lin Tucci is very funny as Sister Robert Anne, the street-wise nun from Brooklyn with an expression of the state of t

Israeli singer's music draws global attention

Alegnu/Aish HaTorah will host the Detroit-trea appearance of Israeli singer Io Amar in concert, 25th anniversary tour, at 8 pm, Saturday, Feb. 22, at Groves High School Auditorium in Birming-ham. For ticket information call the Alegnu/Aish HaTorah office at 988-590, or any Ticketmaster location. Tickets are \$30 (includ-ing an afterglose with Amar), \$20 and \$15.

To AMAR HAS PERFORMED for nearly 40 years in the Middle East, Europe and Middle East, Europe and Given the current global fascination with the region Amar cornes from — he is a native of Moreco and a part-time resident of Israel—the 60-year-old singer represents more than being the world's seminal performer of Sephardic music and traditional Levantine liturgical songs.

radulonal Levantine Intergreat songs. Amar has made more than 50 re-cordings, with many of his songs be-corning standards in the continuum of Middle Eastern music. "To tell you the truth." Amar told

"To tell you the truth." Amar told the Observer & Eccentric from his United States residence in Brooklyn, "If you can hold your level of popularity, which I have for 30 years, people will listen to anything you can say. I just came home for a concert in San Francisco. When they asked me to talk about Israel, I just looked at the people listening, really listening. It wasn't just another singer bringing his songs."

BORN IN Seltat, North Morocco

BORN IN Settat, North Morocco, Amor was one of 10 children raised in a traditional Oriental Sephardic home. He began singing in canterial competitions at 14, yet never considered music to be a career. He spent several years as a religious instructor in small Moroccan towns before moving his family to Israel in 1956. There, he continued to teach. At the same time, he began singing at local concerts and writing songs — usually his own musical ar-

rangements with words from the Tanach, as well as strident, socially relevant new compositions.

"I was hart when I first came to Israel," Annax sys. "The Sophardim Assembly and the Sephardim Assembly the Sophardim Mid-Gost Control of the Sophardim Assembly the Sophardim — Jews with Origins in Spain and Portugal who eventually migrated to Morocco, Algers and Tarkey via Amsterdam — and the Ashkenazi — descendants of the Jews who settled largely in Europe following the disapora — were exacerbated by extreme unemployment and revession. Amar began adversal of the Sophardim.

Amar's popularity quickly grew, and as a result, he quit teaching to sung full time. Amar's piaralstic melange of religious and popular meladically in the Amar's piaralstic melange of religious and popular meladically. Tasked the chief rabbi once." Amar recalls, Saughing. Can we do this combine religious lyrics and popular meladically." He said 'Yes, just make it holy:

YET AMAR SAYS that he never the contraction and themse religious the stems when the stems contraction with

make it holy."

YET AMAR SAYS that he never lets anyone discuss religion with him. "It's between me and God. You do what you want. I do what I want. My level of religion is mine and mine only."

After Amar's American debut at Carnegie Hall in 1966, he found himself performing here so often that he insved his family here. Yet he still belonged to the world. He continued negroes are so content to the moved his family here. Yet he still belonged to the world. He continued to perform on six continents in seven languages, popularizing Sephardie music worldwide.

Twice nominated for a postition in the Knesset, Amar twice declined. "I can help without heigh in," he says. When you're in, you andomatically have a name. I don't want enemis. When you're you who longs for everyone, of ore you who is not a proper or the still of the property of the still head of the property of the still head o



weekly radio show. When he returned, however, his popularity was greater than ever. "They reacted like I was some new singer," he says.

Today, in addition to his performances in Israel and his radio show, Amar spends much of his time in the U.S., both to perform and to visit his four children and six grandchildren.

THOUGH THE metodies of folksongs and the littingly have been known and song for centuries. Amar has popularized Sephardie music the world over Vet his purpose remainsone of immediacy.

"I like to make people laugh and sing with me," he says When I linish and see so many people feeling good, that's all."

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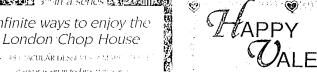
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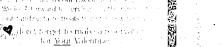
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