

ON THE MARQUEE

Evita

The Jewish Community Center with Nancy Gurwin Productions is holding open auditions for singers, dancers and actors for the upcoming Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber Broadway musical, "Evita," 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 16, and Tuesday, Jan. 19, at the Jewish Community Center, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. All roles available, show opens March 20. For more information, and audition appointment, call Nancy Gurwin 354-0545 or 352-2797 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

"Caldwell Calling"

Trinity House Theatre will present "Caldwell Calling," the first full-length play written by Gary Brda of Plymouth 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 15 and 16. Brda has created a comedy that is fast-paced and clever. It will receive a staged reading after which the audience will be invited to participate in a dialogue with the playwright and cast members to discuss the script. Admission is free to Trinity House Theatre members and subscribers, \$5 to the general public. Trinity House Theatre is at 38840 W. Six Mile, Livonia. For reservations, information, call 464-6302.

Musical

The Jewish Community Center and Nancy Gurwin Productions will present the musical "The Sound of Music" 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, through Sunday, Jan. 31, in the DeRoy Theatre at the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Tickets cost \$15 general admission, \$12.50 seniors, and students, \$10. For information and tickets, call 661-1000, Ext. 342 or any Ticketmaster outlet.

American Artists

The Newman & Oltman Guitar Duo will be featured in the second concert of the American Artists Series 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 17 at Kingswood Auditorium, Cranbrook, 500 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. The program on this chamber music series will include "Cordoba," and "Seville" by Spanish composer, Isaac Albeniz, and "Laments and Dances, from the Irish for guitars and string quartet," by contemporary American composer Arnold Black. Also on the program will be works by Fernando Sor, Jean Francaix and Francois de Posa. For ticket information, call 851-5044.

George Burns Theatre

The George Burns Theatre for the Performing Arts welcomes the Music of Michael Feinstein and Rosemary Clooney in "Say it with Music," Jan. 19-24. Tickets range in price from \$25 to \$45 and may be purchased at the box office, 33330 Plymouth Road, Livonia, Ticketmaster outlets, or by phone, 645-6666.

Play explores race relations

"Master Harold . . . and the boys," examines race relations, an issue that has long torn at the heart of South Africa just as it tears at the heart of Detroit.



"Master Harold . . . and the boys" continues at the Meadowbrook Theatre on the campus of Oakland University through Jan. 31.

For ticket information, call 377-3300.

By HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

A steady afternoon rain sheets the front window of the St. Georges Park Tea Room. It is a gloomy day in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 1950.

Here in this setting, white South African playwright Athol Fugard sets one of the most subtle and searing examinations of race relations, "Master Harold . . . and the boys" plays with audience perceptions and jolts us into new understandings of our own troubled racial views.

"Master Harold" is an actors' play in which three characters literally and figuratively dance around an issue that has long torn at the heart of South Africa just as it tears at the heart of Detroit.

The Meadowbrook Theatre production under the direction of James Brown is rich with nuances and knowing bits of physical characterization, and it builds with intensity until it finally explodes.

Hally, the Master Harold of the title, is a young prep school student. His parents own a tea room in Port Elizabeth. Willie and Sam are the

long term and low paid employees. On this day in 1950, Hally has bicycled to the tea room to do his homework and lock up.

He has a long and friendly relationship with Willie and Sam. This day puts that friendship to the test.

Within this simple framework, Fugard not only explores race relations but class and work relations as well.

Sam is a father figure for Hally. He is a man with intellectual interests and gifts that have been stifled by racism. Daryl Edwards plays Sam with restraint, grace, dignity and, finally, righteous anger. Fugard suggests Sam's character by mention of one of Sam's heroes, Fred Astaire. Edwards brings full realization to this with his elegant movements, his erect posture, his smooth gliding dance and his nimble use of language.

Willie is earthier, more emotional, non-intellectual. Fugard makes a statement here. We can all admire Sam and feel sorry that he has been patronized and overlooked. But we find ourselves patronizing Willie until it suddenly dawns on us that we have no right to do that either.

Todd Anthony-Jackson is an incredible presence as Willie. He walks with a slight stoop and pained look from too many years of scrubbing floors but he forces himself to stand erect to dance. Willie is careful to play the role for the white man but has his own sense of dignity. Anthony-Jackson projects warmth, concern and humor.

At first Benjamin White's Hally seems too intense, almost irritating in his non-stop jabbering. But this is exactly what Hally is. He is a man-child. He is giddy, immature, caught up in his own problems as adoles-



Drama: Benjamin White (left), Todd Anthony-Jackson and Daryl Edwards are featured in "Master Harold . . . and the boys" at Meadow Brook Theatre, on the campus of Oakland University in Rochester Hills, through Jan. 31.

cents always are and oblivious to reality. He patronizes and punishes Willie and he plays games with Sam while carrying on the white man's lie that he is better than this man who is clearly his superior. White is right on target in his portrayal.

The set by James Noone and the lighting by Phil Monat are striking and effective counterpoints to the action of the play.

"Master Harold . . . and the boys" should be required viewing in this racially divided city. Unfortunately, as is usually the case, the Meadowbrook audience was almost completely white.

Hugh Gallagher, is an assistant managing editor, copy desk, at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

'Whose Life is it Anyway?' timely, fine cast

Performances of the Ridgedale Players production of "Whose Life is it Anyway?" continue through Jan. 24 at the playhouse in Troy. For ticket information, call 644-8328.



The Ridgedale Players production of "Whose Life is it Anyway?" is positively riveting. Directed by Kent Martini and Debbie Himmelhoch, Brian Clark's 1979 drama about an articulate, witty sculptor/teacher who chooses to die rather than live paralyzed from the neck down is absorbing

ing drama. The play is more timely today than when it was written.

Dan Fuller shines as Ken Harrison, the sculptor who embodies Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.'s dictum: "To live is to function. That is all there is to living."

Though the lines aren't in the play, clearly this is what the playwright believes, and Fuller does an admirable job of making the audience believe that Harrison can only live as a man who is physically functional. Fuller is the only actor who is onstage (in a hospital bed) throughout the entire

play, and his mobile face, alert mind, and fine delivery of witty lines carries the production.

Selma Cooke is very fine as the competent Sister Anderson, the nun with a "stainless steel heart" who is "immune to emotions." She runs her hospital unit with unflinching energy, yet at the end we know she is a woman with deep feelings.

Thom Griffin as John, the aide who runs a steel band on the side, whizzes about stealing chairs when necessary, shaving patients, and singing "Day, Day-o" rhythmically as he makes Har-

ison laugh and tries to date Kay Sadler, the nursing student.

Kay, played by Carin Klock, is the soul of helpful innocence. John and Kay bring healthy, young life into the hospital, and Griffin and Klock do a bang-up job.

Larry Pellicioni is fierce as Dr. Michael Emerson, who does everything he can to save his patient from making a decision he cannot agree with. Dr. Emerson fights until the last few lines, and Pellicioni makes

See WHOSE, 8C



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