

'The Liar' memorable



VICTORIA DIAZ

dution that may have limited appeal to audiences.

The original commedia dell'arte was a kind of improvisational (though sketched-out) comedy, featuring stock characters and situations. Starting in the 16th century, it pretty much died out in the 18th. In fact, Goldoni tried to revive it with his own written-out plays, which contained many highly popular stock characters and situations, but relatively little improvisation. To say the least, the Trinity House production turns out oddly.

"THE LIAR"
Theater: Trinity House Theatre, 38840 W. Six Mile, Livonia
Closes: Saturday, June 19
Curtain times: Shows 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday
Tickets: \$9 Thursdays, \$10 Fridays and Saturdays, 464-6302
Discounts: Senior citizens and students \$9 Thursday performances, \$9 Fridays and Saturdays.

Some parts of it are highly successful, while others don't work well.

The play — about a young Italian aristocrat who weaves himself into a tangled web as he tries to deceive those around him — certainly looks good. In fact, the set, with its upper levels, lower levels, balconies, steps, archways, and whatnot is one of the very best things about this production. (D-

rector David Reilly doubles as set designer.)
Everybody seems to be trying hard — which, of course, may be an essential part of the problem. After awhile, you just wish things could appear more effortless. That way, they'd be a lot more fun.

Complicating this farther, the play runs longer than 2½ hours. And, while some of those 150-plus minutes are briskly paced here, many are not. At times, the production feels arduously slow. Too often, timing is off, lines are stumbled over, actors don't always appear to be relating to one another.

Still, the production has its moments, and some of them just might be the most memorable scenes when the comic servants: Arlecchino (Timothy Campos) and Columbina (Donna East) "discover" each other from opposite ends of the stage.

Winking, blinking, nodding, giggling, sprawling,



crawling, falling and grinning idly while the while, these two are as delightful as they are bawdy.

In the title role, Dan Zelazny should be applauded simply for keeping up with all his lines in this extremely talky play. He's fun to watch when he inflates Lelio with just the right amount of pomposity and a kind of appealing thick-headedness. He's

less fun when he appears to be exerting a lot of effort.

If you can stomach the stereotype, Connie Cragel does a good job as the empty-headed beauty, Rosaura. And, as her gothic sister, Beatrice, Susan Stirling has a great deal of fun, milking each laugh she gets for all it's worth (and then some). Asti Romero, in multiple minor roles, seems to be enjoying herself with each one.

GARY GRACE

Playing Florinda, an unrequited lover who is supposed to be extremely shy, Michael Stevens spends much of his time making an awful lot of noise. The supporting cast, though they have their moments, appear to be slightly under-rehearsed rather often.

Victoria Diaz is a Livonia-based freelancer, who specializes in arts and entertainment articles in the metro area.

Chamber events showcase outstanding musicians



AVIGDOR ZORAMP

For those who have aspirations for a classical music career — the competition is very stiff and the monetary rewards are scarce. The abundance of such talent in our own vicinity was manifested last week at several chamber events.

Of the three covered here, two of them are managed by Annette

Chajes Music and dedication have made a substantial contribution to the appreciation of music in our community. Since the death of her husband, the composer Julius Chajes, her efforts have been instrumental in exposing his music, much of which evolves around Jewish and Israeli idioms.

The Julius Chajes Music Fund is a series dedicated to the memory of this inspired composer, pianist and teacher. The closing program of the series on May 23 was presented at the Jewish Commu-

nity Center in West Bloomfield. It featured husband and wife duo Virginia Weckstrum Kantor and Paul Kantor, in a program of piano and violin music.

Annette Chajes was also in charge of the Showcase of New American Musicians, on May 20 which featured a program at the Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills by Russian Jewish artists who have immigrated to this country in recent years.

Another Jewish community event was the closing program of the Schmier Chapel Chamber Se-

ries at Temple Israel in West Bloomfield. That event featured a family of artists — "Raimi, Raimi, Hawkins and Mues," from Ann Arbor.

Works of short duration by a variety of artists were featured at the Adat Shalom event. These artists included violinist Mark Komissarov, balalaika player Gennady Zuk, mezzo-soprano Irina Lechtman, pianists Marina Zarkhin, Tatiana Zut and Zina Astrakhin.

Among the many selections were two short songs by Chajes

featuring Israeli idiom. Other items of major selections consisted of two movements from the Sonata for Piano and Violin by Franck performed by Komissarov and Zarkhin, and arias from "Carmen" and "Il Traviata" sung by Lechtman.

The most unusual artist of this group is Zut, whose repertoire on balalaika is astounding. Among the virtuosic selections were the Cardas by Monti, which is a violin work, and Variations on a Theme by Paganini by Nechepenko — an unknown composer but the familiar theme is the same used by Rachmaninoff for his set of variations for piano and orchestra.

A dance by Chajes was also featured on the Julius Chajes series at the Jewish Community Center.

Some heavy duty talent was featured at the Schmier Chapel event. The small room of Temple Israel was filled to capacity for that event. The four artists were

violinists Max Raimi and Diane Mues, cellist Fred Raimi and pianist Jane Hawkins.

Two major works on the program were the Sonata for Cello and Piano by Debussy and the Trio in A minor for Violin, Cello and Piano by Brahms.

Other items on the program, consisted of short Schumann selections from Marschen Bilder arranged here for piano and viola, and a little known Beethoven duo for cello and viola and "Two Obligate Pairs of Eye Glasses," which was Beethoven's own humorous title. In addition, there were arrangements of Hebrew songs and a theme from the Passover Hagada by Max Raimi, whose successful talents as a composer and arranger are in addition to his impressive capability as a violinist.

Avigdor Zoramp, born in Poland, educated in Israel and the United States, has a Ph.D. in math and has studied piano, music theory and history.

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items to be considered for publication in *What's Cooking* to: Keely Wygonik, Entertainment Editor, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Our Fax number is 591-7279.

CHIEZ PIERRE
Chez Pierre in Rochester will offer a winemaker's dinner 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 1 featuring Michael Chapoutier of Tain-L'Ermite in the Rhone Valley of France. Five-course dinner along with wines, \$65 per person, plus tax and gratuity. Reception with winemaker 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner. Call 660-1390 for reservations.

CHARLIE'S CRAB
Merchant of Vino six-course wine dinner accompanied by seven regional Italian wines at Charlie's

Crab in Troy, 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 7. Cost \$55 per person. Call 698-0900 for reservations.

PIKE STREET
Decanter Imports owner Judy Riedinger will sponsor a charity dinner for the Saint Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center 7 p.m. Saturday, June 5 at Pike Street Restaurant in Pontiac. Five of the area's premier chefs will join Pike Street's chef Brian Polcyn in preparing the various courses accompanying the wines. Cost \$150 per person. Call 344-6644 for reservations.

COCINA DEL SOL
Merchant of Vino wine tasting, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 9 at Cocina Del Sol in Southfield. Cost \$25 per person. Call 689-0900 for reservations. California's Bonny Doon Vineyard's creative

winemaker Randall Graham will present his uniquely-styled wines in a casual format accompanied by hot and cold buffet foods prepared by the restaurant.

MACHUS RED FOX
Machus Red Fox in Bloomfield Hills will welcome Fred Fisher in dinner featuring the wines of Fisher Vineyards Tuesday, June 8 — 6:30 p.m. reception, 7:30 p.m. dinner. Cost \$65 per person, all inclusive, call 626-4200 for reservations.

MACHUS SLY FOX
Sally's Porch reception for Fred Fisher featuring the wines of Fisher Vineyards 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 9 at Machus Sly Fox in Birmingham. Cost \$25 per person, all inclusive, call 642-6900 for reservations. Reception menu includes imported and domestic cheese with fruit, grilled quail, house smoked barbecued ribs, Amish chicken quendillas, salmon corn cakes, carved roasted sirloin, and triple chocolate mousse torte.

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