

THEATER

'Superstar' wins with Jumpstart

"Jesus Christ Superstar," 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, July 27-29; 3 p.m. Sunday, July 30, Louis E. Schmidt Auditorium, 20165 Midland Road, Livonia. Tickets \$16, senior citizens and groups of 16 or more, \$13.50. Call Ticketmaster (810) 645-6666 or (313) 426-5782. Tickets also available at the door.



SHARON LEBENSTADT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Following: Masses of followers in a scene from Jumpstart the Arts' production of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

REVIEW

The youth of Oakland and Wayne counties are well-served in "Superstar." Sometimes "nice" comes in the simplest forms, bringing with it coolness and warm fuzzies. Andrew Lloyd Webber created one of the "nicest," and one of the most popular, tunes in "Everything's Al-Right."

Local youth talent Amy Law delivers an excellent version of this tune as Mary Magdalene comforts Jesus. Law is a stand-out actress perfectly capable of leading the chorus in this landmark song. Law also shows tremendous stage presence with the ever-popular "I Don't Know How To Love Him."

As the days go by, Jesus is brought before Pilate, played by Sean Jenness, and Herod, played by Dan Finnerty (both of New York).

The scenes with Pilate are somber or fever-pitched as Jenness takes masterful command of the stage with a stunning voice. "King Herod's Song" provides Webber's trademark unexpected comic relief as Finnerty two-steps with grand comedic style. Stephanie Myre of Farmington gives the audience a wonderful,

strong voice in "Pilate's Dream" which prophesies Pilate's dilemma to come.

The show's major dilemma, however, was the unfortunate disadvantage of a truly atrocious sound system that the actors had to overcome. Many of the show's subtleties and superb voices were lost; lyrics were alternately not heard or sound blasted the audience out of its seats.

Jumpstart The Arts brings to life the age-old wisdom: if you want to succeed or expand, surround yourself with those a step above your current surroundings.

Jumpstart The Arts does a fine job in doing just that. The ensemble work is terrific; the choreography (Susan Ancheta), especially for the Tormentors, is phenomenal. The movement for "The Temple" and "Superstar" are excellent exercises in concentration.

Highlighted youths from our community performed extremely well. Too bad more leads couldn't be filled by the young adults. As this is Jumpstart's first production, perhaps more leads will be filled by young local actors next year.

Sally Dubats of Troy is an actress, director and teacher, who teaches at community theaters in the metropolitan area.

"Jerome Robbins has put together... the most savage, restless, electrifying dance patterns... the sheer visual excitement is breathtaking." —STACY H. KING

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