

THEATER



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Musical tale entertaining

The Marquis Theatre, 135 E. Main Street, Northville presents "The Shoemaker and the Elves," 10:30 p.m. weekdays, Aug. 17-18, 22-25; 2:30 p.m. Saturdays, Aug. 19 and 20, Sept. 9, 16, & 23; and 2:30 p.m. Sundays, Sept. 10, 17, & 24. Tickets \$5, children under 3 1/2 will not be admitted. Call (810) 345-8110.

By LARRY PRYBY
SPECIAL WRITER

The bright and buoyant cast of "The Shoemaker and the Elves" teach all a valued lesson when performing this well-known tale, a musical adaptation of the classic Brothers Grimm tale.

The lesson "It is more blessed to give than to receive" is demonstrated best by unselfish Lockhart and Matilda Cobblestone (the shoemaker and his wife) who help out a number of townsfolk in the city of Clankbottom.

This musical tale begins with the Cobblestones helping an elderly woman by supplying her with a pair of shoes to cover her bare feet. This senior turns out to be a "magical" person who rewards the caring couple's kindness by making them five helpful and funny elves who create wondrous shoes in the wee hours of the morning.

"The Shoemaker and the Elves" cast members are students of the Marquis Theatre camp. While many stupendous theatricals are found in this theatrical production, one of note is Lara

REVIEW

Kvalvaag who plays the leader elf, Moritz. Kvalvaag, who recently returned from a national tour of the Broadway musical, "The Secret Garden," has Impish-like gestures and movements allowing him to perfectly portray an elf. In addition, his solo, "I Bless this Home," is sung softly and sweetly, and adds just the right touch.

Another top-notch performer is Laura Haerberle who plays Loretta Le Pointe, a ballerina and client of the shoemaker. Haerberle delivers her lines enthusiastically as she shows her fine dancing form on her toes.

Two others are not easily forgotten, Nick Nerio and Laurie Boloven, as the shoemaker and his wife, are cute, quite humorous and "sickly" lovey-dovey.

The set, which depicts the shoemaker's home and workshop, provides various levels on which the actors perform. The sneaky elves retreat to the orchestra pit when hiding from the Cobblestones; the towns people enter and deliver their lines on an entry and stairs above the workshop, and cast members run off the stage and through the audience. These varying "stages" keep the action moving and help the audience feel a part of the performance.

Also of interest are the costumes, which help portray "The

Shoemaker and the Elves" as a fairy tale, or at least something out of the norm.

A variety of hats from bonnets to sailor hats to elves headpieces that fall to stay on the little heads, are the most predominant feature of the colorful costumes. Like the hats the costumes are not from any specific period, although the play is billed as taking place "a long time ago."

For instance, Mayor Clankbottle's attire is "Roaring '20s" featuring with a "loud" glad sportcoat and sequined bow tie. The shoemaker wears a velvet waistcoat with knickers, something definitely suitable for Victorian-era royalty, but not the "poor" character he portrays. But then again, this is a fairy tale.

"The Shoemaker and the Elves" is entertaining. It's a nice way to end the summer or start the school year.

Libby Pryby, a ninth grader at Groves High School in Birmingham, has been involved in children's and community theater productions for 10 years.



On stage: The Marquis Theatre Children (bottom row) Michelle Butkovich, (left to right) Nicke Nerio, Laurie Boloven, (top of platform, left to right), Megan Keller, Taylor Roberts, Laura Haerberle, and Gina Colosimo present "The Shoemaker and the Elves."

Friends Alliance hosts benefit cabaret

Here are some upcoming theater dates to note.

Friends Alliance is hosting "Friends for Friends" a cabaret style show by Tritillon, a professional theater company featuring Broadway and pop numbers Monday, Aug. 28, at the Millennium Theatre Center, 16500 J.L. Hudson Drive, Southfield. Doors open 7 p.m., show starts 8 p.m. There will be an afterglow.

Tickets are \$15 per person and available by calling Friends Alliance (313) 831-4400, Chosen Books of Michigan (810) 643-6769 or Pronto (810) 644-7000.

The show is a benefit for Friends Alliance, a nonprofit organization that provides direct services to people living with HIV/AIDS in the metro Detroit area.

The Fisher Theatre in Detroit will present "Wook Slide Story" by Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim and Arthur Laurents, Sept. 6-24. The tour, which begins

PREVIEW

in Detroit, will cover 30 U.S. cities and include stops in Canada and Japan.

Tickets for shows 8 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, 7:30 p.m. Sundays are \$55, \$40 and \$25 per person. Tickets for 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday performances are \$60, \$45 and \$30. Call (810) 645-6666 for tickets or (313) 872-1000, Extension 0 for information.

Stagecrafters will present "Into the Woods," music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine, Sept. 8 to Oct. 1 at the Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette in downtown Royal Oak. Tickets \$14 for Friday-Sunday performances, and \$12 for Thursday performances. Call (810) 641-6400 on Tuesdays and Thursdays 7-9 p.m. and Fridays 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

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- Shari Lewis • 7 pm

SEPT

- Roger Whittaker
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