

THEATER

Players musical revue a barn burner

The Farmington Players present "Broadway Banned: A Musical Revue," a lively look back at the Farmington Players past. 8 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, Sept. 18, 19 and 25-26, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20, 32332 W. 12 Mile, west of Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. \$20, proceeds to benefit the building fund. Call (248) 553-2955. BY BOB WEISZ. STAR WHITES

"Broadway Banned" celebrates 45 years of theater by the Farmington Players in their venerable former dairy barn on 12 Mile Road. After more than 140 comedies, dramas and musicals, the barn is about to be replaced with a new theater with a barn motif. The stage lights will fade to black for the final time with this production of "Broadway Banned." It is a stylish, spirited entertaining musical revue featuring 25 numbers from eight popular musical comedies performed over the years.

Musical director James Moris selected songs to provide a memorable, fun-filled evening. "Broadway Banned" is a sentimental journey without lapsing into maudlin sentimentality.

Directors Cynthia Tupper and Suzanne Rogers keep things moving, and get in on the act with rousing performances in "Take Back Your Mink" from "Guys and Dolls" (1980).

Jan Forhan's beautiful voice is the highlight of "Brigadoon" (1997) along with Ves Spindler, who is also excellent in "I Believe in You" from "How to Succeed in Business" (1995). Forhan, incidentally, is scheduled to deliver a baby two days after the show closes. Now, there is a trooper.

Barbie Amann's dancing is sensationally seductive as "Lola" from "Damn Yankees" (1974). And the boys score a hit with the "You Gotta Have Heart" number. The tap dancing routine from "Anything Goes" (1993) is crisp

and exhilarating, and the "Friendship" comic timing superb. "Paloma Game" (1984) is represented by a devilishly sinful rendition of "Hernando's Hideaway" with sultry lighting and special effects.

And of course, those wemonstared sailors had a great time with "Nothing Like a Dame" from "South Pacific" (1982) as did the girls with "Honeybun" (and three show stopping guys in hula skirts, coconut bras and yellow mop wigs).

The whole cast closes out the evening with a luminous performance of "Applause" (1985), which explains why they work so hard, all summer in this case, to

prepare a show for the public.

In addition to those above, the outstanding cast includes: Lisa Muscio, Thomas Adams, Ellen Akias, Tim Belanger, Otto Canis, Shaw Currier, Michael DeMott, Beth Egan, Craig Forhan, Dave Gilkee, Katie Gilkes, Kristie Haas, Irene Hongatsbeck, Jim Manna, Maureen Mansfield, Jacquie Pouillion, Mary Lou Ryzenga, and Brian Tupper.

Benefit performances of "Broadway Banned" continue through Sept. 26. It is among the first of many events designed to raise the \$800,000 required for the new air conditioned barn theater featuring expanded seating (up to 240 from 170).



STAR PHOTO BY BILL BRENDA

Directing: Co-directors Sue Rogers and Cynthia Tupper watch as the Farmington Players work on a scene during rehearsal.

Ridgedale presents 'Fascinatin' Gershwin'

Ridgedale Players celebrates the 100th birthday of George Gershwin with an evening of song and dance - "Fascinatin' Gershwin," 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Sept. 18-19 and Sept. 25-26, 3 p.m. Sundays, Sept. 20 and Sept. 27 at the theater, 205 W. Long Lake Road (between Livernois and Crooks Road) in Troy. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for season ticket holders, call (248) 988-7049. Doors open an hour before curtain time.

"Fascinatin' Gershwin," a pre-season fund-raiser for Ridgedale's Building Fund, is a gala evening, all wrapped around a wonderful night of song and dance. The evening begins with hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, champagne and regular punch. Enjoy coffee and desserts during intermission.

Ridgedale has plans for an extensive renovation to the playhouse, which includes a ticket booth, a larger green room, and expanded lobby.

Directed by Barbara Gowans of Birmingham, and produced by Dave Scott, "Fascinatin' Gershwin" will feature music from popular Gershwin shows such as "Porgy and Bess" and "Girl Crazy." You'll hear all your favorite songs including, "Summertime," "It Ain't Necessarily So," and "Fascinatin' Rhythm."

Dianne Nowland is in charge of the choreography. One special number will be a tap dance to "I Got Rhythm."

Event proceeds will benefit Ridgedale's building fund. Ridgedale has plans for an extensive renovation to the playhouse, which includes a ticket booth, a larger green room, and expanded lobby. The cast includes Martin Boni of Oxford, Gonie Garner and Mary Jo Wilson of Rochester Hills, Diane Dillard and Holly Hellsten of Troy, and Susan Borin of West Bloomfield.

Season schedule
Ridgedale opens its 1998-99 season Friday, Nov. 6 with "Twelve Angry Jurors," by Reginald Rose - Adapted by Sherman Segel. Performances Nov. 7, Nov. 13-15, and Nov. 20-22.
"A View from Here," a comedy by Margaret Dulhaney, will be presented Jan. 8-9, Jan. 15-19, and Jan. 22-24.
"Beau Jest" by James Sherman will be staged March 5-6, March 12-14, and March 19-21. The season closes with Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods," based on book by James Lapine, April 30, May 1-2, May 7-8, May 14-16, and May 21-23.
Season tickets are \$41, seniors or students \$37. Individual tickets are \$11, and \$13 for the musical. Call (248) 988-7049.

Shakespeare Goes West!

Sept. 16 through Oct. 11



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Tuesday, September 22, 7:30 p.m.

Join us at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center for Gilda Snowden, the first lecturer of the 1998-99 season in the Captive Audience Lecture Series. Gilda Snowden, respected Detroit artist and educator, is a featured artist in the exhibition *Capturing the Essence of the African American Experience through its Artists*, October 9 - October 31 presented by Links, Inc. in the Art Center's Desalle Community Gallery. The BBAC is located at 1516 S. Cranbrook Rd., just North of 14 Mile. For further info call 248.644.0866.

The Captive Audience Lecture Series is sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc.