

Curtain Going Up by Wally Roberts

Add the Wayne Civic Players to your list of community theater groups now presenting musical comedies in a most professional manner. "Kiss Me Kate" was the musical the Wayne group elected to present this past weekend.

Old Wally traveled over to Wayne Memorial Auditorium, a magnificent structure that houses 800 patrons, to see a first musical comedy effort by a hard-working, well-coordinated organization. The auditorium was filled to near-capacity for this premiere.

Bruce Graden, the musical director, raised his baton and the lilting strains of Cole Porter's enchanting music permeated every corner of the auditorium. "Kiss Me Kate" calls for some spirited dancing. Al Posey kicked the show off brilliantly with his head-clipping eye-rolling rendition of "Another Opening, Another Show." All high-kicked his way into the hearts of the audience with his second act show-stopper "Too Darn Hot." All the dancers that backed up Mr. Posey showed the results of Evelyn Falsetti's persistent efforts to produce some of the best dancing seen in the community theater production of a Broadway musical for many a moon.

Bob Gregory, who teaches

dramatics at Redford Union High School, dramatically demonstrated that those that teach can do. And how wonderfully he did. His "Blanca" number and Rose dance gave the show a true professional touch. "Kiss Me Kate" is Bob's sixth musical comedy. His experience in interpreting and selling a song comes through loud and clear.

Rob Roy, director of this big bundle of entertainment, can smile confidently now that he has finally launched the Wayne Civic Players into the exciting world of musical comedy. He might take one word of constructive criticism from old

Wally who has directed some 30 shows both straight and musical. The word is "pace." A musical must keep moving all the time. When the curtain closes, put some of the action out in front of the curtain. Once the pace falters, you temporarily lose the audience. I'm sure by next year this small fault will be repaired and a constant flow of dialogue and action will be in evidence.

Before we leave the southern part of Wayne County and the Wayne Civic Players, I must mention their stunning success program. Costing only 25 cents (I would have gladly paid 50 cents) this booklet was the

biggest buy of the evening. Pictures of the cast, information about their organization, and a two-color, cover completed a most interesting and provocative program. My congratulations to Bob Weibel, Wayne's energetic president for such an innovation. Let's hope you continue with these musicals, programs, and have a most successful season.

We will have a report from our neighbors to our north, the Farmington Players, and how successful their production of "Come Blow Your Horn" was by next week. Plays have been opening so fast and furious that old Wally has been forced to entrust some of the reviewing to two assistants: Kay Deutsch and Lee O'Connell. As soon as the reports filter back from my assistants I'll print same.

In Eastern Michigan University Players opened their 1964-65 season to an enthusiastic capacity audience in the Quirk Theater. Jan de Hartog's "Fourposter," a heart-warming, chuckle-laden, comedy drama, was the feature attraction of the evening. Graig Berger and Susan Lebowitz held the stage for two hours, and kept the audience in a jolly mood. No

mean trick for a pair of university actors.

Director James W. Gousseff kept his married couple moving nicely in the opening and closing acts. Act two seemed a bit static. However, old Wally's complaint is really a minor one since the show had so many fine qualities. The costumes were perfect. The setting as designed by Dr. Gousseff gave the actors ample opportunity to prove their versatility. The stained glass in the windows was a gay 80's touch that lent a proper Victorian touch to the set. Each act the set changed appropriately and gave added interest.

"The Fourposter" is a play that demands great physical movement for its success. All the byplay with the pillow embroidered "Good Is Love" in Act III comes alive when the actors suit the action to the words. Likewise in Act I the dialogue is magnificent and becomes brilliant when the awkward couple moves to the bed proper. Each scene is a masterpiece of delightful appreciation. The audience on opening night went out of Quirk Theater smiling and dry about their stay—the production had been a smash.

Rehearsals Start for 'Bye, Bye, Birdie'

"We love you Conrad— Oh yes we do— "We love you Conrad— and will be true"

So go the lyrics to one of the top tunes in "Bye Bye Birdie." It's really the theme of the keen, cool musical. And it's also typical of present day "Beatle worship."

"Bye Bye Birdie" is a delightful show and will be presented in the Franklin High School auditorium on December 2, 3, 4, and 5. It's an all-star project achieved by the enthusiastic cooperation of FHS students and faculty.

Directing the gala production is David Hirvela, U. of M. graduate and a well-known member of the English-Speech faculty. Hirvela is well qualified to direct the musical with his considerable talent as stage director, set designer and overall coordinator. He auditioned 150 aspirants for the show before choosing a cast of forty players. They are:

Conrad Birdie, Charles (Al) Brecky; Rose Alvarez, Tazula Mumford; Albert Peterson, Robert Zink; Ursula Merkle, Kay Schoch; Mrs. Peterson, Mary Moore; Mr. Mac Afee, Gary Burton; Mrs. Mac Afee, Kay Grismer; Kim Mac Afee, Alexis Naimola; Randolph MacAfee, William Mulcrone; Hugo Furbelle, John Bagdasarian; Gloria Rasputin, Diane Michalko; Guitar Man, David Falsetti; Bird Girl, Stephanie Miquelon.

Able assisting in staging "Bye Bye Birdie" will be: Mrs. Margan Vogterchian Choreography, (wife of Aram Vogterchian, head of FHS counseling staff); Roy Ernst—Musical direction, (FHS Band director); Oliver Genn—assistant director, Business Education faculty, in charge of committee, props, tickets, publicity; Art Anderson—Set Construction, (Industrial Education faculty).



MRS. MICHIGAN, Elmira Egeland is shown here passing out portions of a 250-pound birthday cake in celebration of the 5th anniversary of Wonderland Shopping Center. The three-day event, Oct. 15, 16, 17, included two daily "Motors and Music" variety shows, a Montgomery Ward talent contest, drawing for a color television, and the cake cutting.



THE MONTEYES, shown in action here, won the Montgomery Ward talent contest Saturday during the three-day 5th Anniversary show at Wonderland Shopping Center. Runners up, the Top Cats and Rockets, were awarded record albums by Marvin Stampen, candidate for State Representative of the 35th district.



CHASE AND PARK, internationally known trampoline troupe, are shown going through their flips during the three-day 5th anniversary extravaganza at Wonderland Shopping Center.

THE BILLBOARD

Fisher Theater—"I HAD A BALL" Sunday Hackett comes to town with a new musical. Hackett is a singer, actor, and a lot of fun to see. He is in the show before it hits Broadway.

Wicks Theater—"THE TENDER TRAP" Opened on October 12 for a five week run. Group is located in the Royal Waverline and Operate on the weekends only.

"THE HOSTAGE" "WAR AND PEACE" These plays are now running Wednesdays through Sunday evenings at the Arts and Sciences Theater. Saturday and Sunday matinee. Repertory runs until October 16.

High Hall Auditorium—"AN EVENING OF READINGS" Two talented members of the Greater Guild of Livonia-Redford will read the 3 act musical "The Tender Trap" and "The Hostage" on October 16 and 17. Show begins at 8:30 p.m. One performance only.

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Livonian Has Title Role "Antigone"

Sybil Kuczyński, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alwyn Kuczyński of 18940 Curtis, Livonia, has been cast in the title role in the upcoming University of Detroit Repertory Theatre production of Sophocles' "Antigone" in a new translation by Jean Anouilh.

Miss Kuczyński, a member of Players Associates, is a 1964 graduate of Mercy College.

"Antigone" opens Nov. 12 and will be seen in alternate performances with Mollere's "School for Wives" through Jan. 10 at U. of D.

For schedule and ticket information call 342-1000.

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