Wally Roberts

GOING UP 'CURTAIN

Harold Pinter's "The Caretaker," a disturbing drama that produces provocative thoughts, is being given brilliant exposure by three able, talented Detroit actors . . . at the Concept East Theater in Detroit on East Adams.

The Concept East is Detroit's answer to off-Broadway "The Caretaker" is playing just off Woodward Avenue for those of you that would welcome a weekend relief from the living room "boob tube" and the wide, wide, usually vacant-silly silver screen.

Mark Murri, John Kinney, Lee O'Connell, and Dave Rambeau are certain there must be some people in the sprawling suburban area that want their brain box jogged. This ambitious quartet reopened the Concept East after its unfair closing by the Detroit Police Department.

"The Caretaker" enjoyed long runs in London and New York. The Concept East production is Detroit's second look at this exciting play. The Stables Theater did a version a couple of years ago. The run was far too short. Producer Dave Rambeau is to be complimented for bringing us a second production of such a powerful play.

"The Caretaker" explores the relationship of people to each other without thinking too much about their place in society. Pinter has been commended for his uncanny ability to have his characters release veritable torrents of language and yet their speeches are merely an indication of what we really don't hear.

Pinter is more concerned with what we don't say or communicate. Actual communication with other individuals is too upsetting. We go through life afraid to reveal how empty and poverty-stricken our lives really are. Consequently, the silences and things unsaid in "The Caretaker" create a horrible awareness of YOU and you can't leave the theater without being a bit "shook up" philosophically.

Is this too shocking an experience for the average playgoer?

Old Wally thinks not. We need an experience like this. As you live with the characters in "The Caretaker" for an evening, you do take heart that other folks in our society have the same frustrations and have to contend with violence, selfishness, and the constant confusion of our times.

Mark Murri as the selfish self-important tramp does a perceptively creative job. John Kinney who plays the more violent, demanding brother underplays his role superbly. Kinney directed the production so that it never falters and each scene vibrates in vivid fashion.

Lee O'Connell as Acton, the benevolent brother reaches new thespic heights with his second act climax speech. Lee along with Mark Murri and John Kinney create a form of ensemble acting that is a joy to watch and experience. The rapport they establish makes this production of "The Caretakers" a "must see" item on your entertainment list.

Take the time to plan a trip to the Concept East Theater. They are open on Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays. The admission is a modest price for the quality of the acting displayed. You'll be happy that I recommended such an adventure in disturbing drama at Detroit's finest off-Woodward establishment.

Festival To Draw Area Teens

Teenage musicians from all the high schools in the area serviced by The Observer Newspapers will participate in the Solo and Ensemble Festival Feb. 12 and 19 at the Highland Park High School.

Sponsored by District 12 of the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association the festival will draw on students from four south Michigan counties.

According to Festival Chairman Frank Wilson of Garden City "The festival this year year will be the largest interschool event in the state. Nearly 5,000 students will participate in more than 3,000 events."

Roy Ernst of the Livonia School System told The Observer that the participation in the event from this area is wide. "Every school will be represented," he asserted.

Participating students spend many weeks of hard work preparing a solo or ensemble to perform before an adjudicator, according to Ernst. The adjudicator then writes a helpful critique and rates the students on a scale of one to five. Students who receive a rating of "one" participate in a statewide festival in April.

KIRK DOUGLAS tries to resume marital relationship when he discovers his divorced wife, played by Ulla Jacobson, is also a member of the Norweigian Resistance in Anthony Mann's "The Heroes of Telemark." The Columbia release is now showing at the Mai Kai Theatre.

AT CLASSIC

'All's Well' Well Done

By WALLY ROBERTS

Shakespeare's "All's Well That Ends Well" as performed by the Hilberry Classic Theater Company gives ample evidence that the 1966 company has reached a new peak of perfection. All is so well with this classic production that Old Wally is ready to give the entire Hilberry Classic company a standing ovation.

Director Richard Spears deserves a lion's share of the credit for his brilliant directorial concept. He has taken "All's Well" out of the 17th Century and moved into the 20th century without jarring Shakespeare's lovely poetry.

The actors have taken to this play so avidly that you sit entranced the entire evening. Speech after speech rings true and clear. All the nuances and philosophy hit their mark. George Wright as Porolles struts and frets magnificently. His facile facial expressions, his psuedo-posturing, and his meaningful delivery of those difficult Shakespearean speeches gives the character a true universality.

Ellen Varian as Bertram's mother is excellent. Her grasp of the aged mother is complete and etched beautifully. Borden Marshall, Robert Orman, Marjore Lerstorm, Ingrid Sonnichsen, Pat Criner, Philip Davidson, William Hexlep, and Robert Folmer give a creative example of ensemble playing.

No one actor ever over balances the other. "All's Well" is a strange hybrid of folk-tale and morality play. To deliver the message demands cooperative, unified efforts of the entire cast.

The modernistic touches provided by the Classic production team given this version "All's Well" a vivid sense of reality. This "a-go-go" version provides an abundance of comic moments and provocative philosophy. Check the repertory schedule for this winner. You'll have a real fine time and hear a thoughtful line as: "The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together" . . .

Wilder Classic Opens at U of D

The third production of this years University of Detroit Theatre season, Thornton Wilder's "The Skin of Our Teeth," opens Friday, Feb. 4 in the U. of D. Theatre on the third floor of the McNichols Campus Library.

Director Alan Jorgensen of the U. of D. Theatre faculty describes the three act comedy as "A Pulitzer Prize-winning study of the extraordinary adventures of an indestructible family which survives a thousand calamities and a million years. Using the largest cast in U. of D. history, "The Skin of Our Teeth" employs over 40 members of the Players and the community group, the Players Associates.

"The Skin of Our Teeth" premiered at the Plymouth Theatre in New York in 1944 under the direction of Elia Kazan. The characterizations of Frederich March, Tallulah Bankhead and E. G. Marshall earned immediate critical acclaim and spurred the play on to become one of the most popular works in dramatic history.

Running for three consecutive Friday-Sunday weekends from its February opening, the U. of D. production closes Sunday, Feb. 20. For ticket information call the U. of D. Theatre at 342-1000, ext. 207.

Wayne Ladies Slate Theatre Party Feb. 25

The theater party staged annually by the Farmington-Livonia alumnae club of Women of Wayne will be held Friday, Feb. 25, at the Farmington Players Barn when the Players put on the comedy "George Washington Slept Here."

Curtain time is 8:30 p.m. The barn is located at Twelve Mile and Orchard Lake Rd.

The Wayne State University alumnae group uses proceeds from the party each year to contribute to a WSU scholarship fund and finance its service project, aiding needy families in the Farmington area.

This year an afterglow party is scheduled at the Danish Inn on Grand River.

Reservations for the performance may be made through chairman Betty Zann, 31718 Summers, Livonia, GA. 2-8141.

Theatre Guild Sets Comedy

Fresh from its highly successful production of Anthony Newley's "Stop the World, I Want to Get Off" the Livonia-Redford Theatre Guild will present its second play of the current season — "Lullaby," a comedy by Don Appell — on Feb. 25 and 26 at Franklin High auditorium.

"Lullaby," the story of what happens when a middle-aged bachelor decides to cut out from the apron strings of a domineering mother, is being directed by Edgar Guest III.

A 1960 graduate of Dennison University, Guest spent three years in Ohio summer stock as an actor and director, played Japan, Korea and Okinawa for the State Department in "The Man Who Came to Dinner," and toured the Eastern United States in a one-man show on American Humor. In the past few years he has established himself as one of the most respected actor-directors in the Detroit area.

Howard Egan, a 10-year Guild veteran heads the cast in the lead role of Johnny. Egan, a branch manager for the Dictaphone Corporation, has recently appeared in feature roles in "Dark At The Top of The Stairs," "Harvey," "Guys and Dolls," and "Bye Bye Birdie."

Opposite Egan is Lorene Brooks, the female lead, as Eadie. A graduate of the Massachusetts School of Art, Mrs. Brooks broke into show business as a folk singer on a weekly radio show and previously served the Guild as assistant director on "Time of the Cuckoo," and "Show Train."

Cast in the role of the Mother is Estelle ("Valya") Goodman. Miss Goodman, a dancer and painter in addition to being a respected actress, has been associated with the Guild for three years. She has appeared in "Destry Rides Again," "Ways and Means," "Bye Bye Birdie," and "Michigan Showcase."

Rounding out the cast is Phil Nyhuis, a Guild newcomer, who appeared in "Stop the World."

"Lullaby" is being produced by Jack and Judy Pierson, and tickets can be obtained through any Guild member or by calling KE 2-1537 or 422-7505.

Siamese Kitten Contest Begins

In conjunction with the Walt Disney film "That Darn Cat" starring Hailey Mills, The Terrace Theatre in Livonia is sponsoring a "Win A Siamese Kitten Contest."

According to Terrace Manager William Marcus not one, but two first prizes will be awarded to children through the auspices of the Michigan Humane Society.

All that is necessary to win is to write a short letter on the statement "How people can be nice to cats and kittens." This letter should be mailed to the Siamese Kitten Contest, Terrace Theatre, 30400 Plymouth Rd., Livonia.

Included in the letter should be your age and your parent's consent to winning a kitten.

In addition to the kittens the first place winners will receive a kitten bed, toys and other items from the Montgomery Wards store at Wonderland and medical prevention care from the humane society.

Consolation prizes will also be awarded. The contest ends March 1.

The Walt Disney film will be shown at the Terrace Feb. 16 through March 1.

Judges for the Win a Siamese Kitten Contest are: Joseph Andrews, executive secretary of the Michigan Humane Society; Tom Becker, Montgomery Wards; Wally Roberts, Observer Newspapers; and Bill Marcus of the Terrace.

During the showing of the film representatives of the Humane Society will be at the Terrace between 2 and 4 p.m. on Feb. 19 and 20 and Feb. 26 and 27 There will be both kittens and puppies on display at that time.

Holds Over Film

The management of the Livonia Cinema Theatre has announced that it will hold over "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" for a seventh and final week. The Doris Day comedy "Do Not Disturb" scheduled to open this week will be shown at a later date.

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Mich. Ave. 1 Mile W. of Wayne Rd.
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We Dare You to See
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"FANNY HILL"
PA 1-3150
STATE-WAYNE
Mich. Ave. 1 blk. W. of Wayne Rd.
Wed. to Tue., Feb. 2 to 8
Peter Sellers
in
"What's New Pussycat"
—Also—
Maximilian Schell
"Return From the Ashes"
PA 1-7400
LA PARISIEN
Ford & Middlebelt Rds.
Wed. & Thu., Feb. 3 & 3
Laurence Olivier
"OTHELLO" in Color
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COLUMBIA PICTURES presents A BENTON FILM PRODUCTION
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THE HEROES OF TELEMARK
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Screenplay by NAIL MOFFAT and BEN BARZMAN · Produced by S. BENJAMIN FISZ
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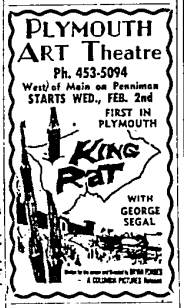
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WITH GEORGE SEGAL

LIVONIA Cinema I & II
Middlebelt at 7 Mile Entrance Mall E
—NEXT— WEDNESDAY

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Nightly Showing 7:00 and 9:00
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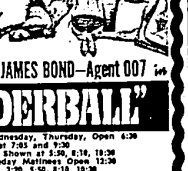
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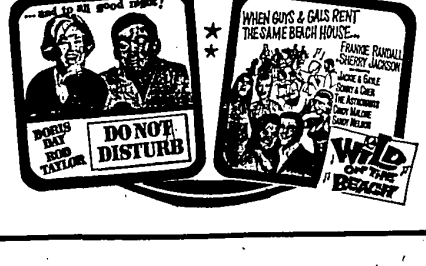
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