

# Davey singers offer annual show

Thursday, December 8, 1976

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Detroit's 40-member Max Davey Singers and Dancers will present their annual Christmas show, the year featuring the husband-wife acting team of John and Patty Duke-Astin, at 8:15 p.m. Saturday in Ford Auditorium.

The original show and music entitled, "Christmas in the Air," will feature a mini-drama in the first act, "The Christmas Journey," which depicts the pilgrimage of the black magi from Ethiopia following the Christmas star to the crib of the Christchild in Bethlehem.

The script and music were written by Ian O'Kun, of New York, who did the book, music and lyrics for the Hitmark Theatre's classic, "The Littlest Angel."

O'KUN ALSO wrote various versions of the Davey group's Freedom Foundation award-winning musical, "America, I Hear You Singing." That show officially opened the bi-centennial observances earlier this year in Lansing and Livonia and highlighted the Troy community's observance of the nation's 200th birthday.

Last August, the "America" show was presented in a benefit for William Beaumont Hospital before a capacity audience at Oakland University's Baldwin Pavilion, and featured pianist Roger Williams and Frank Blair, of television news fame, as guest artists.

Patty Duke and her husband, John Astin, will act as the storytellers for "The Christmas Journey." This year's production will include traditional Christmas songs, new original music, a singing a

Davey tradition) and an OKun comic show stopper involving a group of monks in France and that country's most famous export.

THE TALENTED Max Davey of Farmington Hills, heads the group of 40 singers and leads an all-star orchestra as well. He is assisted by his wife, Margaret, who acts as business manager of their production company, Concert Series, Inc. Choreography is by Dominic Masumi, of the UD Marygrove Theatre of Performing Arts. Set design are by Westland artist-sculptor Gary Papenik.

Reserved tickets for the concert are \$8 and may be obtained by calling Concert Series, Inc. at 474-6724.

John Astin, who received an Academy Award nomination for his writing, producing and directing effort, "Prelude," is perhaps best known for his portrayal of Gomez Addams in the TV series, "The Addams Family."

His wife is a veteran of 21 years on the stage, screen and TV. She is currently appearing in Universal's "Best Sellers" miniseries, "Captains and the Kings," on ABC-TV. After 75 TV dramas and movies, she was chosen in 1959 as the youngest person ever to star as Helen Keller in Broadway's "The Miracle Worker" with Ann Bancroft. Both stars won Academy Awards for their roles in the film version of the play.

This marks the beginning of the Astins fifth consecutive theatrical season as a team.



## Winter offering

Ron Merkin (right) of 4165 Blackburn, West Bloomfield, portrays Kemp, and Joe Kolinski of Detroit appears as Will in William Gibson's "A City of Players." The production is presented by The Theatre of the Performing Arts Center of the University of Detroit and Marygrove College. This winter offering opens Friday on the Marygrove campus for a two week end run.



JOHN ASTIN

PATTY DUKE-ASTIN

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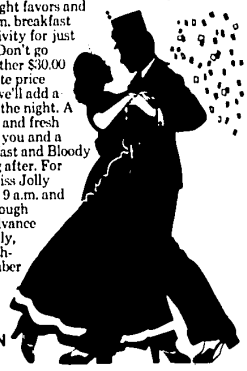
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