

Comedy takes off in 'Period of Adjustment'

By HELEN ZUCKER

Review

his homely wife (who has left him on Christmas Eve because he quit his job at her father's plant).

BATES is the character who teaches his wife, George Haverstick, how to be tender with women, and thus make some headway with his virgin wife. He's the man who knows about love, who has turned a homely woman into an attractive, sexy lady who improves with the years. Susan Redmond as the nervous virgin, Isabel Haverstick, picks up speed and assurance after a hesitant start. She talks to herself convincingly. She has a wonderful scene on the telephone trying to talk to her daddy through little shrieks and gasps.

The Franklin Village Players production of "Period of Adjustment" takes a bit of getting used to. It's a "serious comedy" by Tennessee Williams, the same Tennessee who gave us "Glass Menagerie" and "Streetcar Named Desire." It's Williams standing on his head. No one stomps about shouting, "Stella." Characters do twitch about, calling, "Lil bit?" "Honey?"

About halfway through the first act, the atypical Williams mood—sentimental in cheek—establishes itself, and the play takes off. It isn't vintage Williams, but Williams is always lively. The cast gives it life, and the production is a good one.

Ron Wheeler is very believable as the likable Ralph Bates, the man who marries for money and discovers five years later that he respects and likes

new wife, whom he met during her last job as a night nurse in a St. Louis hospital.

These three jobless souls sit about in Bates' living room in High Point, a suburb that is slowly sinking into the cavern over which it is built. Isabel has fainted at the sight of blood in the operating room.

George has the shakes so bad he's quit his job as a ground flight mechanic, and Ralph has had it with feeling like a left wheel in his wife's family.

Paul Dufault is a live wire in the role of George Haverstick. He shakes himself all over the stage, screaming and howling like a baffled child, as much a virgin to marriage as his bride, in many ways.

After Haverstick dumps his wife, making her think he has abandoned her, he returns with champagne. But as he stops insulting women, he stops shaking.

As the curtain comes down, Dufault as Haverstick turns a radiant, grinning face toward the audience. He's a winner. He's got his wife in his lap by the fire, and he's got his old buddy and his buddy's returned wife to join him in a solid venture on the ground.

THE TWO ex-pilots are going to raise longhorn cattle, "distinguished animals," for TV westerns with the

capital from Bates' sinking house and Haverstick's funeral car. They've all pulled themselves out.

Delores Dorsey as Dorothea Bates, the wife who has fixed her nose, extracted her buck teeth, and finally, more importantly, slammed the door on her parents' interference in her marriage, is very good.

Though it's a bit hard to believe she was ever homely as she sashays through the final moments of the play in a "French nightgown" borrowed from the bride.

David Roberts is loud and funny in his brief appearance as the offensive Mr. McGillicuddy. And Janice Sayles, whom I remember as the sassy dresser-maid in the Farmington Players' production of "Hay Fever," is just as sassy, polished, authoritative and funny as she cleans out the house she thinks her daughter is abandoning.

Director John Lake directs with vigor. The play gets off the ground and stays off. The sets by Diane Lake and the sound and special effects (cars, TV, music, the house sinking) by Gary Roberts and the lighting by Mel Drumm of the Groves High School staff are all well done.

"Period of Adjustment" is the Franklin Village Players' final production of the season.

How to send news items

News releases, photographs or other information can be mailed to Ethel Simmons, entertainment editor, at 1225 Bowers, Birmingham 48012 or delivered to the Birmingham office of the Observer & Eccentric.

The phone number of the Birmingham office is 644-1100.

Garter Snappers appear in concert

A musical variety concert by the Garter Snappers Plus Four, sponsored by Torry Elementary School in Birmingham, will be held at 8 p.m. June 3 in the Seaholm High School auditorium.

The concert will be a musical revue featuring banjo, blues, jazz and Broadway musical numbers. It is offered by the Torry PTA as a fundraiser to obtain additional programs and materials for Torry students.

The Garter Snappers Plus Four consists of a doctor, a salesman, a medical secretary, a teacher, a housewife

and automotive engineers, who share in common a musical background. They have appeared at such places as Cleary Auditorium, Windsor, and the Masonic Temple in Detroit, as well as many private clubs.

Ticket information for the June 3 performance can be obtained by calling Torry School at 644-8000. Tickets are priced for adults and for children and senior citizens. Children under 5 are free. Family tickets also are for sale.

There will be free bus service to and from Seaholm from Torry School the night of the program.

Troy woman named to Adelines board

Sandy Marhoff of Troy has been named a member of the board of directors for the Macomb County chapter chorus of Sweet Adelines, an international four-part barbershop harmony organization.

Women interested in singing with the group, which is preparing new material for a show to be held in the fall, may call new membership chairman Jeannine Bell in West Bloomfield at 855-2942.

The chorus rehearses at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays in Henry Ford II High School, 1191 Clinton River Road, Sterling Heights.

The Macomb chapter under the direction of Carl Dahlke of Madison Heights recently won first place in the region Two competition held in Troy. The region includes eastern Michigan and western Ontario.

The win entitles the chorus to participate in international competition in St. Louis, Mo., in October 1979.

The Road Company, a quartet with members all from the Macomb chapter, won fourth place and novice prizes in the contest. Members of the Road Company are tenor Ellen Benton of Warren, lead Susan Gleason of Troy, baritone Beckie Martini of Troy and bass Adele Thayer of Sterling Heights.

Troupe performs 'Brel'

The musical "Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris" will be presented by the Oakland University Department of Music on four successive Friday and Saturday nights starting June 23.

The program features 25 songs by the Belgian-born poet and composer performed by members of the Meadow Brook Estate, the university's student jazz and musical troupe. Curtain time is 8 p.m. in the Studio Theatre of Varner Hall.

The acclaimed musical explores life and each person's relationship with the world. More than just a musical revue, each song in the show presents its own story.

The production is directed by Stephanie Rivers, a director-choreographer who has worked in schools and theaters from Chicago to Florida.

Tickets are priced for general admission and for students and senior citizens. For information call 377-2030.

Film showing benefits club

A benefit showing of the Bruce Lee film, "Enter the Dragon," for Common Ground and the Oakland Community College Tae Kwan Do Club, will be held Friday at the Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus.

Screenings will be at 5 and 7 p.m. in room J-239 on campus in Farmington Hills. An additional showing may be seen at Common Ground, 1900 S. Adams, Birmingham, at 9:30 p.m.

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