

Thursday, March 11, 1982

Bennett directs 'Shadow Box' at Will-O-Way

Guest Director James S. Bennett will open a production of "The Shadow Box" by Michael Cristofer on Friday evening at Will-O-Way Repertory Theatre, 775 W. Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills.

The play for mature audiences will continue at Will-O-Way at 10:30 p.m. Saturday and March 19-20 prior to moving to the Eagle Theatre in Pontiac for 10 performances at 8:30 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays, March 26 through April 24. The Eagle Theatre is at 13 S. Saginaw.

A native of Detroit, Bennett has spent the last 10 years providing technical assistance, acting and directing at theaters in the Port Huron area.

"The Shadow Box" addresses one of the two remaining taboos in our society forthrightly and with humor," Bennett said. "Perhaps it allows us to see our own situation — mortality — in a clearer perspective than is possible subjectively."

THE PLAY deals with death, yet tries to leave the audience with a sense of hope and comfort.

The production takes place in three cottages on the grounds of a large hospital. Emotions vary through the five different stages a person will go through when he faces his own death — denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

"Most everyone will find a surrogate self in the script," Bennett said.

The 39-year-old Bennett, who is a Viet Nam veteran, began his theater career as an apprentice at the old Northland Playhouse in 1962. At the same time he studied through the Honor's College at Michigan State University.

Bennett presently is an artist-in-residence at Will-O-Way Theatre.

Several other area residents are taking part in the production. Marlene Loucks of Bloomfield Hills will play Beverly. The production staff includes Tracy Kroposchot as stage manager. A Birmingham resident, she also is an understudy. Martin Kihn of Birmingham is an instrumentalist on the flute.



James S. Bennett is director for Will-O-Way Theatre's production of "The Shadow Box."

Tickets are \$6 for Will-O-Way or Eagle Theatre performances of "The Shadow Box." For reservations and theater parties call 644-4418.

review

Ruffwater band makes winter fun

By Chris Brockman special writer

Everybody complains about Michigan weather, but nobody does anything about it, right? Well, not exactly.

The Ruffwater Stringband has come up with a "Michigan Winter" you'll just love. "Michigan Winter" is the name of Ruffwater's premiere recording, an album of 17 songs of the type it does better than anyone else.

The Ruffwater Stringband is a unique musical group in the Detroit area can be proud to call its own. The 13 musicians all live in metro Detroit and all are members of the Paint Creek Folklore Society, headquartered in Rochester.

They specialize in old-time music, especially the kind that made country dances so much fun in the Michigan of the first third of the 20th century.

THIS ISN'T to say that Ruffwater's music is "country" in the usual sense of that term. It is music that was used or could have been used to accompany the sometimes rollicking, sometimes elegant dances that "country" people used to do, and still do.

Contradances, big circle dances and pairs dances such as the schottische, as well as square dances, are being resurrected by dance clubs around the state and around the country.

Ruffwater has played for the monthly "Olde-Time Saturday Night Dances" of the Detroit Country Dance Society for more than 10 years, in ad-

dition to playing concerts and at festivals around Michigan, Ohio and Indiana.

What makes the Ruffwater Stringband special, even among stringbands playing old-time music, is its "choir" of four hammered dulcimers that give it a one-of-a-kind sound.

The dulcimers, combined with fiddles, guitars, a bass, banjo-mandolin, mandolin, recorder, Celtic harp, piano, accordion and wooden spoons give the band a rich, full sound and a lot of possibility for variations.

"MICHIGAN WINTER" features considerable variation, from a capella harmony, to a traditional folksong, to big numbers featuring the entire band. The generous offering of 17 songs includes swing tunes, jigs, rags, schottisches, marches, waltzes, polkas, an allemande, a shanty and others that defy easy classification.

The recording itself is extremely well produced and engineered. It was a long time in the making and shows the care that went into it. The band recorded each number over and over until it got each one just right.

Anyone who has heard Ruffwater with some frequency will recognize these performances as definitive.

The technical work also was done with care. There is absolutely no background noise, and the sound is full-bodied. The balance and mix of voices and 13 instruments, as well as the separation, are well done.

For more information about "Michigan Winter" write Michigan Seasons 001, 3715 Lincolnshire, Pontiac 48054.

Theater guild co-hosts Furay Theatre Festival

The Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford will join Lycee International to co-host the 10th annual Furay Theatre Festival on March 26-28 at Lycee International, 30800 Evergreen, Southfield.

Sen. Jack Faxon will serve as honorary chairman of the festival, which provides an opportunity for community theater groups to get together, exchange ideas and see a variety of work being produced at a local level.

The Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford has won prizes for the best production twice, with "Lion in Winter" and "Equus," and for best direction with "I Never Sang for My Father."

There will be a reception at 6 p.m. March 28 while the judges deliberate. Any area theater groups interested in participating or desiring more information may contact Jeff Nahan at 642-1178.

Attic Theatre interprets lifetime of Lenny Bruce

"An Evening of Lenny Bruce" opens Friday at the Attic Theatre on E. Lafayette at Beaumont in Detroit's Greektown.

At midnight Fridays and Saturdays through April 10, Robert Grossman will play Lenny Bruce.

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Why?... You might ask?
Well, perhaps you already knew that the Dry Dock and J. Ross Brownne's are owned by the same company. And, that we both serve the same menu and maintain the same levels of excellence to offer you the best seafood and steak selections in the Detroit area.
So, to be less confusing for all of us, we've decided to change our name to J. Ross Brownne's.
We also think this is a great time to introduce our new menu. Lots of your old favorites plus some truly unique new house specialty items. Like our Gourmet Stuffed Shrimp, Branded Lobster Stir Fry, our Bountiful Seafood Platter for Two and our Chablis Baked Seabass. We hope you'll visit us soon and we'll go overboard to make your experience special.

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