

In Gold Rush Saga

Southfield Players Score Hit

BY LORRAINE MCCLISH

The Southfield Community Players chalked up another credit with the production of Lermer and Loew's "Paint Your Wagon" which opened Friday night on the stage of the North Congregational Church.

The success of the musical rests heavily on the rich voices of the two male leads, Richard Gursberg who played Ben Rumson and Joe Arcel, as the Mexican, Julio, backed up by a strong male chorus of miners who carried their dreams of fame and fortune

with them in California's gold rush. Nada Feldman, as Jennifer Rumson (Ben's daughter) together in scenes with Gursberg and Arcel gave the show both its most poignant and tender moments, while Karen Romo, as Elizabeth, ran away with top honors for its comedy.

THE FANTASY and the frustration of making it rich with a gold strike was told in the most tender scene of the play when Julio sang to Jennifer, his new-found love, "I

Talk To The Trees — but they never listen to me," then attempted to teach the uneducated miner's daughter to dance.

Equally beautiful was Ben's reminiscence of his dead wife, "I Still See Eliza," performed by Ben and Jennifer with an accompanying dream ballet sequence.

Another moving highlight was the loneliness of the miners, expressed in the song, "I Call The Wind Maria."

The miners weren't lonely for long, thanks to the Spanish Cherry (played by Karen

Kavorkian) and her Fandangos girls who arrive in a ball of merriment, shouting, singing and dancing in the show's biggest production number, "There's A Coach Comin' In."

The play takes place in Rumson Town "where the climate is so healthy we had to hang a fellow to start a cemetery," named after and founded by Ben who was born under a "Wanderin' Star."

Ben watches his town's population explosion as the miners strike gold and he watches it become "the fastest dying community in the west" when

the gold vein runs out, and the miners move on.

THE STORY OF the many people who come to Rumson Town is told in a superb staging of "I'm On My Way" done in small groups who sing "where am I going, I don't know; where am I heading, I'm not certain, but I'm on my way."

High point here was carried off by the Mormon Jacob (Bill Rachles) and his two wives; the comically frustrated Elizabeth and the conniving Sarah, played by Debbie Franczak.

Amusements

Founders Society Plans Ball May 23

Music of two orchestras will be featured at the Laser Ball of the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts. The ball will get under way at 9 p.m., Saturday, May 23.

Nationally-famous Lester Lanin will play in the Great Hall of the institute, while the dancing in the north court will be to the music of the Detroit-based Sunday Funnies, a rock group.

Refreshments will also be available at the affair, sponsored by the Junior Council of the Art Institute.

The ball gets its name from multi-colored laser projectors which will be activated by the orchestra music, and from a new art form which will show laser-projected three-dimensional reproductions.

Tickets are \$40 for couples, plus membership in the Founders Society. New members are invited to join and attend the ball. The cost is \$25 for a family or \$15 for an individual.

Tickets and memberships may be reserved by calling the museum at 832-2285.

Terpsichorean

'Happening' Set

A "Spring Dance Happening" will be presented by the newly-formed dance department of the Detroit Community Music School, at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 23, in the W.H. Auditorium, 618 W. Lafayette Detroit.

Described as "zeroing-in dance," the informal production was created and choreographed by Patricia Lee Novak and her students. The first half consists of a series of modern dance techniques and a series of improvisations. Students will perform their own works during the second half. All young people interested are invited to the demonstration.

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