



## At Hilberry

Von H. Washington (left) and David Fritts are Lt. Col. Frank Harrow and Major Evans Chandler in Stephen Taylor's "Appear and Show Cause" in repertory through Saturday, Dec. 1, at the Hilberry Repertory Theatre at Wayne State University in Detroit. A Broadway production of the drama has been planned. For ticket information about Hilberry performances, call the WSU theater box office at 577-2972.



second runs

**Tom Panzenhagen**

## Good movie hosts are hard to find

The best movies on TV are those shown uncut and without interruption — that's for sure.

Canada's CBET Ch. 9 comes closest, airing most movies in their entirety and with a minimum of commercial interference. The movies seldom are new or even recent, but purists take heart knowing they are at least intact.

Occasionally public TV, Ch. 56, opens its vaults and runs a movie marathon, giving air time to classic films that remain stashed away 11½ months out of the year. These broadcasts are "commercial-free," too, although countless interruptions for pledge breaks more than compensate for the lack of traditional sponsors.

There can be no disagreement that there's no substitute short of cable for movies-on-TV fans who want to see their motion pictures screened in totality.

Yet there's another form of movie entertainment — the antithesis of uncut, uninterrupted movies — that's disappearing from the scene. It is an art form nonetheless, and in a way, it's a shame that it's becoming a thing of the past.

That's the TV movie host.

BILL KENNEDY, Sonny Elliot, Dean

*Of course, the best of the movie hosts was Bill Kennedy, who left local TV last year and retired to Florida.*

Miller, Bob Hynes, Rita Bell, Conrad Patrick, Mary Morgan, Sir Graves, The Ghoul, Morgus, Svengoolie, Jim Harper, Fred Merle and others all have hosted TV movies with varying degrees of success.

At their best these hosts enhanced the presentation of movies on TV. More often, at their worst, they detracted from the movie and frequently turned viewing of a favorite film into a tortuous experience.

How many times, for instance, could one tune in to "The Bride of Frankenstein" for all the right reasons — the marvelous performances, sets, musical score — only to be sidetracked by Morgus or Sir Graves in another inane comedy sketch?

On the other hand, if it weren't for the format of a Sir Graves program, "The Bride of Frankenstein" might re-

main buried in another of those movie vaults.

By the same token you'll note that when Rita Bell's "Prize Movie" grew stale, it was retired — along with the movies it supported. Now we have no nagging mystery tune interrupting our morning movie and no morning movies.

OF COURSE the best of the movie hosts was Bill Kennedy, who left local TV last year and retired to Florida.

When Kennedy was on the mark, he augmented his movie presentations with fascinating tidbits of gossip and trivia often culled firsthand from encounters with producers, directors and stars during Kennedy's own Hollywood days and nights.

He could tell stories about Cable and

Grant, Flynn, Davis and de Havilland, too, and make them sound authentic and immediate no matter how historic or outdated they may have been.

And he had a knack for making the worst movies seem worthwhile. After all, every movie on TV can't be a gem, but a good movie host can provide cause for staying tuned anyway. Kennedy did that.

This isn't intended as a tribute to Kennedy, though. Rather, it's a gentle reminder to all of Detroit's TV stations.

Don't cut our movies, especially to give the likes of a Bob Hynes or Svengoolie more air time. But if you must give us movie hosts (and, with them, more movies), let them try to follow in the footsteps of Bill Kennedy.

But, please, no more Sir Graves Chastles.

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