

Helen Zucker

Troy Players show has lots of energy

Performances of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Fo-rum," presented by the Troy Play-ers, continue through Saurday, April 5, at the Troy Community Center. For ticket information, call 879-1285 anytime.

879-1285 anytime.

The Troy Players production of "A Funny Talag Happened on the Way to the Forum" is spucky, energetic, and for the most part, what it's meant to be funny.

The good-natured cast seems to love this musical connedy, and its high spirits cross the footlights. The Stephen Sondheim songs are as fresh as today, and Shevelove and Gelbart's script is filled with punchy one-liners that still work.

thied with puncty outstands work.
Craig Juleff is quite wonderful as the quick-witted Pseudolus, Juleff, fortunately, is rarely offstage, and his energy carries the production, Juleffs timing is super, he's always where he's supposed to be, his phrasing makes his singing a delight and he has that special, 'crazy' quality good comedian have.

Philip D. Martin is dandy as Senex,

the Daddy of Hero, who has a yen for his son's girl . . . Martin gives us a grey-haired Senex who's as sprightly as a jaybird, and Martin knows how to make the most of the good lines he has.

JOE BURDICK as Hysterium, the proper, hard-working slave of the Senex household, who doubles as Philia, the virigh, is at home with Julief and Martin. It's hard to believe this Is Burdick's first stage appearance. He's his best doing the most difficult bullety and best doing the most difficult bullety of the playing the 'dead virigh' and slinging 'Lovely' before the mock funeral secne.

The eunuchs are especially funny; the soldlers are quite clumsy (they're meant to be), and the courtesans are all winsome, athletic, nubile and obviously enjoy playing "maldens of all kinds for sale."

The cast is a bit uneven, but it's a huge cast, and everyone barns it up gloriously, "Cornedy Tonight," the opening number, and the Finale, a number that involves the entire cast, are lively and lit with funny bits.

'Charlotte's Web' captures fantasy

Performances of the First The-attre Guild of Birmingham produc-tion of "Charlottes" Web '9 E.B. White continue through Saturday, March 22, at the First Presbyteri-an Church. For ticket information, call 644-7572 or 644-9043.

If the late American author E.B. White could have seen the First The-ater Gulfd's production of 'Chan-totte's Web, 'the musical play based on his famous story, he would have been pleased with a cast of nearly 50 and a stzable crew, director Del Moore has managed to bring out the sensitivity and charm of this delight. Several sparkling performances appear. Tinka Becker is line as Charlotte, the maternaly spider who waves adjectives such as 'humble' into her web. This is utilimately the salvation of the 'runt' pig. Wilber (adequately played by Kevin Stiller) content of the control of th

of the farmer zon-currents).

The barnyard is a special place where the animals and children use their wils to escape the insensitive forces of the adult world. In addition to the wisdom of Charlotte is the grudgingly given logic of Templeton the mouse (Tom Roberts), The in-

review

souciant Templeton is so irritably disagreeable that he can be persuaded to help Wilber win the prize at the country fair only by being promised a glutonous affair with garbage such as meion rinds. Roberts seems to delight in this role.

Andrew Harrison, playing an "intellectual" ram, is another example of the casting. Harrison has such a strong cerebral quality that he might be mistaken as an aspiring computer analyst at a costume party.

A VERY FINE performance is given by Katle O'Shaughnessey as the
narrator. Her strong, clear voice
serves to blend scenes together and
adds a spirited 'Tairy tale' quality to
the play. O'Shaughnessey's role is fortunately not limited to narration. In
singing segments from the song,
'Charlotte's Web,' she carries her
voice with poligannee and vigor reminiscent of a young Andrea McArdle.

The costumes by Beth Murry and
her crew are nothing short of wonderful. The spindly black costume of
Charlotte and the sparse but clever
pig costume are imaginative and
visually pleasing.

Mary Jane Doerr

This 'Gondoliers' isn't good production

Performances of the St. Bede Players production of Gilbert & Sul-livan's "The Gondoliers" continue through Saturday, March 22, at McAuley Auditorium at Mercy Col-lege in Detroit. For ticket informa-tion, call 557-8527 or 557-7781.

The music of Gilbert & Sullivan al-ways sells — even when their operettas are not well produced.

That was the case last weekend at Mercy College's MeAuley Auditorium, with the St. Bede Players presenting a slow moving, awkwardly directed and unlappred rendition of the English dup's 1889 satirical comedy "The Gon-dollers."

Beautifully dressed in red, white and

Beautifully dressed in red, white and blue motif costumes, a cast of some very fine voices sings the absurd farce in non-comical terms to the sound of an

Machus

which nearly filled the auditorium, had little to laugh at.

CONDUCTOR JOSEPH Garnache leads the 28-member orchestra at a reasonable pace and is demonstrative in his cues and cut-offs. The production would be tremendously improved if his musicians played on pitch.

The 28-member chorus sounds strong at the end of the first act after having difficulty for most of the act with entrances and cut-offs.

George Bloomfield as the Duke of Plaza-Toro, complains of the lack of pageantry on arriving in Venice and back in Spain — no bands, no lighted towers, no enthusiasm.

That is what Gilbert & Sullivan is all about. This production misses the excitement and pageantry of the occasion.

FEATURING of Troy

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Jack Jones, George Shearing perform together

An evening with singer Jack Jones, featuring plants George Shearing, will be held at 8 pm. Thursday, April 10, at the Music Hall in Detroit. The benefit concert honors the late Mrs. M. Morton (Nita Zeff) Barak. Mrs. Barak, known as Billit by friends associates, was a leading member of the Music Hall Center Board of Trustees.

All proceeds will be addded to the Nita Zelf Barak Memorial Trust Fund, an endowment land designed to support a programming endeavors of the non-profile performing arts center. The fund was established with a donation from Mrs. Barak's husband, M. Morton Barak; daughter, Sandra R. Barak; and brother, A. Robert Zelf.

Tickets at \$75 per person include the

performance and reception on stage afterward, to be attended by Jack Jones. Non-patron tickets may be pur-chased for \$25 and \$20.

For further information on the bene-

fit tickets, call the Music Hall development office at 963-7622 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. Other tickets are available at the box office, 963-7680, and at all Hudson's and Ticket World outlets.



Open 7 Days a Week Mon.-Thurs. 11 AM-10 PM • Friday 11 AM-11 PM Sat. 12-11 PM • Sunday 12-10 PM

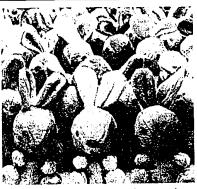
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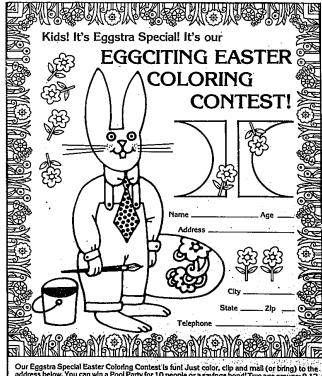
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SOMERSET'S





Our Eggstra Special Easter Coloring Contest is fun! Just color, clip and mail (or bring) to the address below. You can win a Pool Party for 10 people or a savings bond! Two age groups: 9-12 and 8 and under, two winners each! Judging will take place Friday, March 28 at noon, so hurry

And don't forget our Easter Eggstravaganzal There'll be a kiddle theatre, cartoons and stories, pictures with the Easter Bunny, great prizes and a bunny tiful buffet! Call 879-2100 for details.

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