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Porretta Best In Grieg Film

By TIM RICHARD

One could praise "Song of Norway" lavishly or pick it to shreds. The film premiered at the Americana Theatre in Southfield Wednesday.

It's a four-wheel vehicle for displaying the scenery of Norway—scenery so immense and so creatively photographed that this viewer gasped a half-dozen times.

It's a two-wheel vehicle for the music of the nation's greatest composer, Edward Grieg, played by the nation's most popular actor, Torvald Maurstad.

IT'S A roundabout method of bringing to the screen the magnificent voice of Frank Porretta, hitherto best known for his operatic work in New

York, St. Louis and San Francisco.

I dwell on Porretta, not because his parents live in Lathrup Village and he qualifies as home-town talent, but because he's clearly the best singer in this film and a delightful, loose-limbed actor.

Porretta plays Grieg's friend and fellow musical dreamer, Rikard Nordraak. In one scene, Director-author Andrew L. Stone has the incredible bad taste to have the pair sing a duet. Porretta's golden tenors made Maurstad's croak almost embarrassing.

THE STORY concerns Grieg's marriage and early years as a performer and composer. It seems an old flame, whose objecting father died, has inherited a bundle and becomes Grieg's patroness, making the faithful singer-wife suffer.

There being no evidence that Grieg ever committed adultery with the patroness, the story line is necessarily thin. It's clean enough for the whole family (G and A-1 ratings). Remember, this is about Norway, not Sweden.

The script ceaselessly reminds us that Grieg is a great composer, but the ABC Pictures' version nearly gums up much of the genius. The production notes say that Robert Wright and George Forrest ("Kismet"), "The Great Waltz" have "recomposed" much of the music.

They sure did. They tried mightily to turn Grieg's pine trees and snow into plastic palms and tinsel. Fortunately, Grieg was just too good for them. He comes through anyway.



THE MAX DAVEY SINGERS of Ward United Presbyterian Church of Livonia will appear in a television special Sunday, Dec. 20, at 6:30 p.m. They will

be on Channel 9, CKLW: The singers are shown in Farmington where they presented a concert during the summer. (Evert photo)

Davey Singers Perform In Television Special

The Max Davey Singers of Ward United Presbyterian Church of Livonia will appear on television Sunday, Dec. 20, with Pat Boone, Shari Lewis and Jackie Vernon.

The Max Davey Singers and orchestra includes professional musicians who teach at schools and housewives from all overland communities.

The local musicians will perform all the choral numbers and background music for the soloists for the 60-minute Christmas special "The Magic of Christmas" which will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Sunday on Channel 9, CKLW.

musicals at the Center for the Farmington Founders Festival.

"The Magic of Christmas" is hosted by Don Murray and features deadpan comedian Vernon playing Santa Claus.

Other singing groups include The Free Design, a folk-rock ensemble, and The Little People, a children's singing group.

AN EFFECT on the show never presented on television before is a "People Tree," a giant tree created, decorated and lit by the cast.

Another feature of the show, produced by Irving Yeaworth Jr., is a segment on early Christmas cards including the first Christmas card ever made.

amusements 3 Area Artists Earn Awards

Charles M. Green of Farmington and Maureen and Edward Fella of Southfield are three award winners in the 58th Exhibition for Michigan Artists which opened Dec. 16 in the Detroit Institute of Art.

Green received the Sylvia Medow Memorial Prize "for a work by a young sculptor" for his plexiglass, leather and cloth sculpture of a banana.

Maureen Fella was awarded the Lakeside Palette Club of St. Clair Shores prize for an outstanding work, her silk screen print "Airflow Hollywood."

Edward Fella received the Hal H. Smith Memorial Purchase Prize for an outstanding print, "Barbary Girl," and also had a second print accepted for the exhibition.

OTHER SOUTHFIELD residents in the biennial exhibition are Mildred Friedman and Carol Wald, with paintings; Marcelline I. Gross with a Dada Pop Fireplug sculpture; Richard Leaman and Joyce Nagel, with drawing and print en-

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Saturday
CKLW 9 TV

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5:30 P.M.

Barbara McNair
7:00 P.M.

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