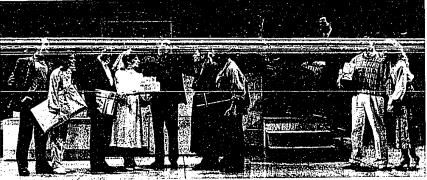
Aichais

Company' star is strong in role

Ferformances of the musical from both the performers and the avadence to glumb their psychologistanday, March 19, at the Birmingham Theatre. For ticket and formation, call the box office of 644-333.

By Barbara Michals special writer Siephen Sondbelm's "Company," currently revived at the Birmingham Theatre, takes a fascinating, penetrating look at marriage. The production features a few outstanding performances among a completen but generally lackluster cast: The show's strength lies almost solely in Sondbelm's musical vision, which audiences tend to love or hate. Classic Sondbelm is never the traditional American musical — no happy endings or catchy, hummable tunes. The lyrics and the music are difficult," requiring a great deal of the strength in the substantial of the 1970 "Company" of the substantial presented as prefer madering the value of the 1970 "Company," currently revived at the Birming, near the substantial of the 1970 "Company," currently revived as the characters emphatically asserting the substantial of the 1970 "Company" of the characters emphatically asserting the substantial of the 1970 "Company," of the characters emphatically asserting the company, which are the characters emphatically asserting the company, fusic source to the characters emphatically asserting the company, fusic source to the characters emphatically asserting the company, fusic source to the characters emphatically asserting the company of the characte



Davis Gaines (lifth from left) is Bobby, a bachelor whose married friends help him celebrate his birthday, in the Birmingham Theatre production of "Company."

nals Bobby receives from his mar-ried friends.

GAINES IS wonderfully believable as Bobby, He is a bandsome, poised actor with a powerful voice and winning smile. If that gria scems at times too fixed, it is an appropriate cover for Bobby's perplexity as he tries to digest his new insights into his friends relationships. Among those friends, Alison Bevan is marvelously bitchy as the ul-

tra-cynical Joanne, now on her third marriage. Her sarcasm bristles in "The Little Things You Do Togeth-er" and her boozy rendition of "The Ladles Who Lunch."

Ladies Who Lunch."

Donna Lee Marshall is excellent as Amy, the bride-to-be who gets cold feet at the last minute. Her "Getting Married Today" is a very funny patter song which she delivers at break-neck speed, accompanied by very expressive facial grimaces.

Anne Connors as April, the steree-

typical dumb stewardess, and Car-olee Carmello as Marta, a tough, streetwise New Yorker, both make their characters very creditable but never remotely likeable.

The rest of the cast delincates their characters just barely or not at all. Under musical director Johnny Bowden, the ensemble numbers sound line, and James Noone's sim-

exception of the siewardess' uniform and one "70s peasant look that at least makes a definite statement. Director George Rondo has not achieved a perfect "Company," but Sondheim's insightful, thought-pro-voking lyrics and forection music are very much worth the listening.

all. Under musical director Johany
Barbara Michals teaches high
sound line, and James Noone's simple set is cleverly versatile.
FOR YUPPIES, the women's costumes tend toward tacky with the

table talk

Soup winners

SOUD WINNERS

The three winning soups in a context-called the "Great Detroit-Area Sout-Off" are being featured during Biphrunary at Wellington's in the Embessy Suites Hotel-Detroit/South-Fild. The restaurant, which sponsors by annual contest, served the third piece winner, Red River Scotch Broth (from Jill Burns of Ferndale), through Saturday. Second place winner, Chicken and Silders Soup (from Johny Kolakowski of Wyandgute, Saturday, Feb. 25, and first place winner, Peanut Soup (from Shella Ingersoil of Systlant), Monday-Saturday, Feb. 27, 20 March 4. Wellington's is open fac Junch, offering a special buffet, fforti 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and for dinner from 5-10 p.m.

Chocolate party

Trappers Alley in Detroit's Greek-town will host its third annual Cho-colate Jubitee from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday-Fiday, Feb. 23-24. Free samples of chocolate treats will be available from Trappers Alley mer-chants. "Downtown Desserts IIf from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, will have Detroit chefs pre-paring their favorite chocolate des-serts on the fourth level.

Armenian food

A "Gastronomical Journey through Historic Armenia" will be presented at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at St. John's Armenian Church

Cultural Hall in Southfield. Food specialities of various regions of Historic Armenia will be feetured, along with a mocking, and vocal mocking and vocal mocking and vocal paramating of New York City. The evening is offered by the Preservation of Armenian Heritage Committee of the Alex Manooglan School as a fund-raiser for the school's 20th anniversary. Tickets are \$40 per person. For more information call 569-2988.

Michigan Feast

Cranbrook P.M. "Adventures in Good Taste" will pay a return visit to the Appe'teaser restaurant in Bir-mingham for a Michigan Feast pre-

pared by Chef Christopher Angelo-sante and his staff. All Michigan products will be highlighted. Michi-gan wines will be served with cach course at dinner. Admission is \$40 per person. For reservations call 645-3635.

Japanese dishes

A gourmet Japanese feast will be served from 6-10 p.m. Saturday, March 11, at the Musahi Japanese restaurant at Town Center in Southfield. The event includes a selection of fine wine by Decanter Imports and Don Lee Distributors. There will be live entertainment. Cost is \$50 per person. Reservations are required by Friday, March 3; phone 358-1911.



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