

Dancer is back for 'Superstar'

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of dancing that keeps her in the audience, and she applauds the dynamic routines and updating of the 970 musical.

Valentine has brought the show into the high-tech, media-mad age of televised religion and persecution by publicity. In the updated version, the traditionally male priests, Calaph and Anna, have been transformed into a manipulative, TV evangelist couple and the traditional male dancers in the temple become Wall Street stockbrokers.

WITH VIDEO MONITORS posted high on both sides of the stage and an on-stage camera to zoom in for close-ups of the action, Valentine's version of "Superstar" expands the controversial rock opera into a multi-media statement about the way

technology has transformed how we treat those we call messiahs, heroes and superstars.

During her years in New York, McCatty has become savvy about auditioning for shows. She says, "I know which shows have a lot of dancing and I know which choreographers I like." She has danced with some of the best and famous, "A lot of wonderful choreographers have died in recent years."

One never-to-be-fulfilled wish is to have danced with Bob Fosse, but she counts herself lucky to have danced with Gregg Burge on German television and with Tommy Tune in "My One and Only." She liked the way Tune treats his casts.

"He hires you because he thinks you can do it, so he gives you a lot of freedom, but he cares about every little thing," McCatty says. "Tommy loves women. He wants all his women to look beautiful. That's nice because you know you won't get stuck with a really ugly wig or costume."

She admits to enjoying the moments of glamor in "dressing up in sequins and glitter and being somebody else or being outrageous." An added pleasure is going back in time. "I feel truly more at home in the '20s, '30s and '40s," she says. As a flapper in "My One and Only," she loved being "peppy and crazy" and believes she physically fit the '20s image. "I'm thin, have little lips, round eyes and thin oval face."

SINCE MCCATTY moved permanently to New York, she has danced in "Guys and Dolls" and "Animal Crackers," in "Sophisticated Ladies" at the Kennedy Center and in a tour of Japan, and in "My One and Only" — big name shows. She has performed in the films "Family Business," "A Shock to the System" and in Spike Lee's "Love Supreme."

How did the gymnast from Troy end up living the life of a Broadway dancer? When McCatty was in high school, her mother suggested she take ballet to enhance her gymnastic skills. That began the circuitous journey to find her niche in dance.

From ballet, she discovered she loved dancing, and after graduating from high school, McCatty enrolled in the Jeffrey Ballet School in New York. At five feet eight and 124 pounds, she is trim and leggy, but she didn't look the part of the classic ballerina. "I was taller and bigger than any girl there," she says. "And I didn't like the stuffy attitude. It was too serious." So she left the school and came home to Troy — knowing she wanted to dance but not knowing where she fit in.

Then she auditioned to be a Detroit Pistons cheerleader and got the job — a radical shift from classic ballet. Even though the Pistons only won 16 games during the 1979 season, she enjoyed being a cheerleader for the season. But she wanted to dance, so she returned to

New York to study jazz and tap under Phil Blade. "I had the technique from ballet and the strength from gymnastics and I found fun people and freedom in movement."

Her first dance job was at the Atlantic City Playboy Club where she danced for a year in a "million dollar Vegas-type show with clothes." Meanwhile she realized she needed to develop her talents. She began taking voice and acting lessons in addition to dance classes. "It's a mistake for performers not to take class," she says, and studies both jazz and tap.

WHEN IN A SHOW, she loves the life of a dancer. Between shows she does occasional modeling jobs and performs at parties through an entertainment company. The reality is, "You're either doing a show, on unemployment, or looking for work."

When she is looking for work, "Auditions can be brutal about 50 percent of the time." As she describes it, "You walk out on stage all by yourself and see only shadows of people in the dark audience. Then you sing eight or so bars of a song until they cut you off. You might hear a 'Thank you.'"

Recently she began auditioning through an agent for principal parts in shows. That ups the ante, but McCatty is a veteran now of the business and says, "I usually don't take auditions personally. Some people cry or wait by the phone. I go on, go to other auditions, take classes — live." It works. The shows keep turning up for this talented dancer who likes nothing more than the challenge of good choreography.

table talk

Wine Wars

Marc Jonna and Joe Bruno continue their Wine Wars from 7:30-10 p.m. Monday, June 4 and 11, at the Community House in Birmingham. The five-part series concludes with wine tastings of chianti June 4 and champagne June 11. Cost for each session is \$25. For registration call 644-5532.

Chefs' choices

Southwestern dishes were among the specialties at the recent Chef's Feast at the Community House in Birmingham. Richard & Reese offered Southwestern Bean Salad with Turkey Sausage. The Midtown Cafe featured a Southwestern Chicken Sandwich — a marinated chicken breast on a tortilla. In the spicy style was Spanish Gazpacho garnished with sour cream and scallions from the Beverly Hills Grill. For the event which was held during Michigan Week, Chef Leopold of Machus Fred Fox served Teriyaki Boneless Pork Chop with Dried Traverse City Cherries and Michigan Apple Compote.

To France

Brian Polcyn of the Pike Street Station in Plymouth was named first runner-up in the recent Bocuse d'Or Competition in Chicago. He and the chef from the Ritz-Carlton in Chicago, who was the winner, will both go to France for the international competition.

Italy-bound

Executive Chef Edward Janos of Too Chez in Novi will head a five-member team bound for Italy to prepare a gourmet feast for the diplomatic staff and selected guests of the U.S. Embassy in Rome. Peter Secchia, a Michigan native recently appointed U.S. ambassador to Italy,

had suggested that an all-Michigan menu be created to demonstrate his home state's contribution to the culinary arts.

Dine, wine

The Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn, and Hidden Collar Wines of California are sponsoring a Winemaker Dinner in the Restaurant of the hotel at 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 11. Dennis Patton, Hidden Collar's winemaker, will be guest speaker. A one-hour wine and hors d'oeuvres reception will be followed by a three-course gourmet meal with wines of Hidden Collars. Dinner is \$52. For reservations call 441-2000.

Culinary winners

Thirteen special awards were presented to high school, college, apprentice and professional chefs at the recent 17th annual Michigan Hospitality Industry Culinary Arts Salon. In the professional category, Mary Brady of Schoolcraft College in Livonia received the Master Chef's Award and Scott O'Farrell of the Skyline Club in Southfield was honored with Best of Show.

Chicken USA

Rotisserie-cooked chicken is the main item on the menu at Chicken USA, which has opened its first outlet at 29528 Northwestern Highway in Southfield. West Bloomfield resident Ted Michael Jr., who is CEO of Chicken USA, said the outlet offers a healthier alternative to foods currently available for quick delivery. Also on the menu are fresh salads, sandwiches and other side dishes. All items are available for carry out, delivery and catering. A second outlet is scheduled to open mid-June at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake roads in Farmington Hills.

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