

Unconventional drama powerfully interpreted

Performances of the Jewish Ensemble Theatre production of "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground" continue through Sunday, July 1, at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield. For ticket information call the box office at 788-2900.

By Barbara Michals
special writer



Barbara Michals

Super-charged with energy most of the time, Randall is a manic-depressive who occasionally runs out of gas and changes his whole persona.

soon as she reaches the store. In the remainder of the play, Rosie will serve as the catalyst that brings Glas and Randall to confess their truths and reach new understanding while both try to convince her to forget the abortion.

ALL THREE performers are excellent, but Johnson's role is clearly the most demanding. Super-charged with energy most of the time, Randall is a manic-depressive who occasionally runs out of gas and changes his whole persona. Incongruously dressed in dark glasses, top hat and short flowing cape, Randall all but swings from the light fixtures as he nervously hops around the small store. He mixes mispronounced big

The first act ends with the sudden arrival of Rosie (Stacie Passon), a young woman who got lost on her way to an abortionist and faints as

words with an exaggerated street-bip style of speech, his delivery at times as staccato as machine-gun fire.

Occasionally one glimpses the other Randall, a ghetto victim who thinks his brilliant mind and educated speech make him a freak in the heartless "killing ground" of his world.

Fox is thoroughly convincing as the morose, antisocial Glas who has shut himself away from the world and internalized all his anger. Passon is likewise very believable as the plain-looking Rosie, low in self-esteem but compassionate to others' pain.

Director Evelyn Orbach does a fine job orchestrating the trio of actors to react from each other. Pacing is smooth throughout. There is nothing "slow" about the production, despite its title and sparse physical action.

Melinda Pacha's set design for the seedy candy store is wonderful. One can almost see the dust stirring when Glas inventories the shelves, and feel the compactness of the world in which he has enclosed himself.



Roosevelt T. Johnson (left), David Fox and Stacie Passon appear in Jewish Ensemble Theatre production of "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground."

Barbara Michals teaches high school English in Southfield. A theater critic for the last 16 years, she is an inveterate playwright who regularly catches up on all the New York productions.

On the Town
DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

table talk

Outdoor cafe

Swanees' Outdoor Cafe opens to the public at 5:30 p.m. Friday at the Novi Hilton. The cafe, next to the hotel's steak and seafood Swan restaurant, operates Monday-Saturday. Cocktails, tropical drinks and other beverages are available. Live entertainment is featured each Thursday, along with Chef Silvia's revolving grill appetizer menu including Cajun-style barbecue shrimp, marinated breast of chicken and baby-back ribs. Other appetizers also are offered. All week long, desserts and cordials from the Swan may be ordered at Swanees.

Fox Centre

Tres Vite, modern cafe that is the joint endeavor of Chef Jimmy Schmidt and Little Caesars President Michael Illich, has opened in the Fox Centre Building in downtown Detroit. The interior design combines custom woodwork, Italian lighting and an exposed kitchen. Photo blow-ups from the Paris restaurant scene of the '50s are hung on the walls. There is furniture crafted by Michigan artisans and Memphis Collection chairs. Menu at the casual, moderately priced eatery (average \$6 for lunch, \$14 for dinners) features grilled entrees, homemade

breads, pasta and desserts, with an emphasis on seasonal ingredients.

Shore dinner

A shore dinner will be presented at the special monthly dinner at 7 p.m. Monday-Tuesday at the Lark in West Bloomfield. The menu includes

codfish beignets, clams casino, oysters provincial, soft-shelled crab with sherry cream sauce (or a choice of clam and leek soup), champagne and cranberry sorbet cocktail, roast Maine lobster, lemon mousse in a pecan shell, coffee or tea and a bonbon, for \$67.50 per person. Reservations are required.

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