

# Some good performances in 'How the Other Half Loves'

Performances of the Troy Players production of "How the Other Half Loves" continue through Nov. 25 at the Troy Community Center, Big Beaver at I-75. For ticket information, call 874-1285.

There presents one of theater's most difficult problems. When do the most ridiculous situations and characters seem believable, and the presentation appears effortless. In a good farce the play's characters never know that they are funny. The more they are in deadly earnest, the more uproarious the scene. The actors playing the characters and the play's director, however, do

have to know when the situation is funny in order to time it just right and milk it for maximum laughs.

This unfortunately, is where Troy Players' current production of Alan Ayckbourn's "How the Other Half Loves" falls. What should be a hilarious play never manages to raise more than a few giggles from its audience. Director George Valente and his cast just don't seem to know when it's supposed to be funny.

For the most part, "How the Other Half Loves" is a typical British sex farce, with a young junior executive carrying on an affair with the boss's wife. Through the usual cases of mistaken identity, a third, very timid



**Mark S. Carley**

couple become the prime suspects in a confusing case of marital infidelity.

THIS THIRD couple, the Detweillers, are definitely the most convincing of the three. As William, Ted Krolikowski is the typical mid-level executive alog. His confusion at

the real and implied extramarital shenanigans is convincing and funny. Colleen Kane-Mohan, as Mary Detweiler, delivers the best performance of the night. She is a meek, sickly wallflower, but her personality starts to change when she gets out from under the shadow of her domineering husband.

Michele Millirons, as the high society floozy Fiona Foster, is also good. Her striking costumes and aristocratic air work well. Joe Urkshus, as her cuckolded husband Frank is likeable. However, he is supposed to be a rather befuddled old fool. That doesn't come across at all, and is one point where a lot of the comedy is lost.

Dane Lawicki and Shirely Biggs are miscast as the Phillips. Bob Phillips (Lawicki) is the show's most difficult role. As Fiona's illicit lover he needs to be both obnoxious and amusing. Lawicki has trouble

achieving that mix. Biggs plays his wife, Theresa at such a shrill level that it is hard to muster up much sympathy for her.

The set is supposed to highlight the difference between the home of a wealthy, tasteful executive and that of a struggling young couple. Here it is hard to tell which home is which.

Mark S. Carley is active in local community theater, both onstage and behind the scenes. He is a member of the Birmingham Village Players and Ridgedale Players in Troy.

## Production explores African-American religious life

Volanda Butler of West Bloomfield and Dana M. Hall of Farmington Hills appear in "Let the Church

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Among the playwrights and poets included in "Let the Church Say, Amen!" are Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and James Weldon Johnson. Each scene

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The show is the first of three minority productions presented this season by the Black Theatre program.

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