

# 'Dining Room' offers lively vignettes

Performances of "The Dining Room" presented by SRO Productions, continue through Aug. 23 at Southfield's historic center, the Burch. Tickets at the Southfield Senior Adult Center or call 354-9362.



SALLY DUBATS

Playwright A.R. Gurney Jr. has a fondness for the American upper class and a passion for the witty manipulation of words which float trippingly in the air, and this is keenly evident in his long-running off-Broadway hit comedy, "The Dining Room." Standing Room Only (SRO) Productions has a fondness for respecting the award-winning serio-comic's work and has created a memorable and funny version of same.

Joel Grossman debuts as a director in this complex SRO show, and he captivates a talented cast. The play is complex, as it must weave through many vignettes without disturbing the pace and he able to set a comic or dramatic tone in an instant. Grossman accomplishes the desired effect with the materials.

"The Dining Room" pokes fun at the upper crust while quietly commenting on the decline of reverence for the dining room in

our American lifestyle. Each actor covers a wide range of materials, portraying different characters ranging from children to the elderly, from comic to tragic.

Lynn Varga is excellent in every expression. Varga shifts from a side-splitting, spoiled 4-year-old birthday girl to a woman on the edge with acting which is controlled and seasoned.

Joseph F. LoGiudice uses his fantastically mobile face to create a myriad of characters, including a stoic and stolid father and a gamut of adolescents and naughty little boys.

A touching and well-interpreted scene between Varga and LoGiudice unfolds when a young boy is confronted with the loss of what seems to be his only friend. The family maid, who has seemed like a mother to him, is seeking employment elsewhere.

Sarah Kamoo and Judie Rosati work particularly well together in a comic scene which depicts the ban of all mothers, letting their daughters choose between fun and responsibility. Kamoo's character is the petulant daughter, whining, "Saint Joan wouldn't go to dancing school in a million years!" "Yes, and look what happened to her!" says Rosati, the firm mother.

John Alwardt performs well the stereotypical yuppie/preppy characters, but would fare better with an occasional touch of sarcasm for added unpredictable



Time to talk: John Alwardt and Sarah Kamoo find themselves conversing under a table in SRO Productions' "The Dining Room."

comedy. There is little difference between his mannerisms as a son listening to a father's funeral wishes in one scene and a macho carpenter working on the dining room table while flirting with his owner in another scene.

Xan Smith makes his first stage appearance in "The Dining Room" and shows promise while creating alternately earnest or comical characters.

The set, designed by Joel Grossman, Marie King, Margaret Gibbs and Bill Mandt, is functional and utilizes the space well. Vicky Yust, Bill Mandt and

Mike Johnson add some impressive and imaginative details to create an upper-class American setting.

The scenes of "The Dining Room" tell a never-ending American tale of family struggles and joys. SRO Productions tells the story well.

Sally Dubats of Madison Heights is an actress, director and teacher, who teaches at community theaters in the metropolitan area. She is artistic director of West End Productions, headquartered in Southfield.

## Ballet from page 5B

choreographed selections commissioned by the DSO and featuring familiar themes — the Waltz from Sleeping Beauty, the Waltz from Symphony No. 5 (which was done here at a considerably faster pace than during a regular orchestral performance) and the Waltz from Eugene Onegin. The Waltz from Eugene Onegin involved all four dancers and was one of the peak choreographic features on this program.

The large audience that turned out for this event provided another upbeat element in this most fulfilling event of the season. Only a steady audience presence, however, entices the hope of halting the demise of this series. Even so, it may already be too late.

August Zaromp, born in Poland, educated in Israel and the United States, has a doctorate in math and has studied piano, music theory and history.

## Country club production of 'Oklahoma!' debuts

"Oklahoma!" Rogers and Hammerstein's classic musical, will be presented Thursday, Aug. 27, Saturday, Aug. 29, and Sunday, Aug. 30, at the West Bloomfield High School Auditorium by the Tam O'Shanter Country Club in West Bloomfield. The Thursday evening performance at 7 p.m. is open to senior citizens from local community groups who are transported and entertained by the country club for

the evening. The Saturday and Sunday shows, which start at 6:30 p.m., are open to the public.

The show stars West Bloomfield residents Lori Weisberg as Laurey and Bob Weinstein as Curly. It is produced by Jack Lawson, with the assistance of Lynda Glasser, and directed by Stuart LaKind. It includes such familiar hits as "Kansas City," "Oh, Wint A Beautiful Morning" and "People Will Say We're in Love."

## Magic Bag Theatre offers musical 'Phantom' spoof

Three Guys Productions at the Magic Bag Theatre in Ferndale announces the professional premiere of "Phantom of the Opera" at 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 7. The musical spoof,

written by playwright Tim Kelly — with music by Mike Vigilant and Gerry Castle — is a show for the whole family.

# Symphony plans upcoming season

Celebrating 18 years as a professional orchestra playing the familiar classics and pops, the Birmingham — Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra, along with music director and conductor Felix Resnick, have planned their 1992-93 season. The year includes five regular season concerts, both classical and pops, plus a benefit concert on Valentine's Day, 1993.

This year subscribers can choose to attend all five concerts at a savings or pick three concerts that fit their schedule, also at a savings, if they order subscriptions now. All the concerts will be held at Temple Beth El, 14 Mile and Telegraph

Road in Bloomfield Hills.

Guest conductor Charles Greenwell will open the season with a Pops concert called "Halloween Classics" with guest artists Marci Staudman, Mark Vandrak and Lawrence Farmosa at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 29. Familiar compositions that will be performed include "A Night on Bald Mountain" by Musorgsky and Saint-Saens' "Danse Macabre."

The next pops concert, "Rule Britannia!" is March 25. Charles Greenwell will conduct Arne's "Rule, Britannia!" Vaughan Williams' "Fantasia on Greensleeves," Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstances

March No. 4" and excerpts from Gilbert & Sullivan's light operas.

BBSO music director Felix Resnick, in his 18th season with the orchestra, will open the Classical series on Sunday, Nov. 22 with a guest soloist, blues player Dan Baker from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. On the program will be Rossini's "Overture to the Journey to Reims," Tchaikovsky's Concerto in F minor for Oboe & Strings" and Strauss' "Waltzes from 'Der Rosenkavalier'."

For more information about the BBSO concert season call 645-BBSO (645-2276) for a brochure. A

subscription to all five concerts is \$60; A personalized series of three concerts costs \$40.



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## Livonia Symphony offers free concert

The Livonia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Francesco DiBlasi, will perform its annual concert for the city's Music

Under the Stars outdoor summer program 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 29, at Civic Center Park. The park is located next to Livonia City Hall

at Five Mile and Farmington Road. The concert will feature Fats Taylor, well known singer and WJRT radio personality.

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