Musical takes you back to high school

BY BOR WEIBEL STREAM WITCH STREAM WITCH STREAM WITCH THE CHIEF After High School?" brings to mind that old snying. "What was hard to endure is sweet to recall." Of life's rocky roads, perhaps none are more memorable that nhose mostly carefree, but often traumatic. "coming of age" high school days. They seem like almost yeaterday in this entertaining Theatre Guild production. The show is memorable in another important aspect. "Is Theat Life After High School?" is a joint venture between The Theatre Guild and Livonia's Creative and Performing Arts program. The partnership allows guild audience. Guild and Livonia's Creative and Performing Arts program. The partnership allows guild audiences to see tomorrow's professionals — while giving talented high school CAPA students the oppor-tunity perfect their craft in a difEl Of life's rocky roads, perhaps none are more memorable than those mostly carefree, but often traumatic, "coming of age" high school days. They seem like almost yesterday in this entertaining Theatre Guild production.

The 11-student ensemble includes — Kevin Barton, Michelle Camilleri, Rence Carriere, Michael Deming, Bree Doody, Mary Jo Fetcher, Jercemy Leland, Gretchen McFadyen, Patrick O'Reilly, Carole Smith and Ray Stakenas.

For the most part, director, Steven Kosinski's cast meet the formidable challenge of performing materials written for adults. The leads sing well and the comedic timing is good. They are students, however, and some have yet to

master an accomplished stage presence and deliver lines with authority.

"Is There Life After High School?" recalls in songs, mono-logues and sketches life's little moments that seemed so import-

moments that seemed so important at the time — the prom, dating, varsity letters, yearbooks, the "in" and "out" rorwd — and yes, even grades. And who can forget three subjects covered in the best musical numbers — "Nothing Really Happened" (about young love), a

rousing "Beer" ditty (recounting a rite of manhood) and "Diary of A Homecoming Queen" (noting that one's life may not turn out glamo-

one's life may not turn out glamo-rous).

Before the evening is over, it's all put into context — including life's little disilluslonments. For example, "I believed trigonometry would be useful someday." Did anyone really believe that one? CAPA students also handled most technical elements of the show, which were well done — es-pecially the many costume changes. The dim follow spot, however, detracted from the show. Perhaps fixed area lighting would work better.

Bob Weibel of Westland is a freelance writer, who has spent more than 25 years in community theater as a director, designer and



High school memories: The cast of "Is There Life After High School?" bottom row: Gretchen Rae, Michelle Camilleri, second row: Carole Renee Smith, Jeremy Leland, Bree Doody, third row: Kevin Barton, Mary Jo Felecher, Patrick O'Reilly, Renee Carriere, Ray Stakenas, and Mike Deming take a break from rehearsal.

Dancers showcase talents in LSO presentation of 'Nutcracker'

The Livonia Symphony Orchestra will present a concert of holiday music featuring soprano Nancy Villeneuve 6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18 at Livonia Mall, located on Middlebelt at Seven Mile.

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Mischlevous mice and wind-up dolls danced their way into the audiences' heart Dec. 4 when the Livonla Symphony Orchestra and Contemporary Civic Ballet Com-pany took to the stage to present

Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker."
LSO music director/conductor,
Francesco DiBlosi teamed with
Rose Marie Floyd, artistic director of the Royal Oak dance company, to lead the ensemble in a
solid out, two-hour family treat
that has become a holiday tradi-

The "Nutcracker's" many solo parts afforded company dancers the opportunity to showcase their individual talents. Employing high energy and humor, Melissa Miller played the roles of Mouse

Sarah Maggetti as Clara ex-creiaed great concentration, stay-ing in character, even when she was outside the spotlight. Clad in a black cape with one eye covered by a patch, Horace Floyd of Troy kept his annual tradition of playing the eccentric uncle, Herr Drosselmeyer. Floyd slinked mysteriously across the stage and scolded the children with style. After intermission and a series of colorful dances, Kathleen Tra-

Fonte D'Amore

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Kids get in the act in 'You're A Good Man Charlie Brown' The Lunch Bunch Players will "You're A Good Man Charlle and 27, and Jan. 3 and 9 at the on Michigan Avenue at Green-present the family musical Brown," Dec. 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 Henry Ford Centennial Library field in Dearborn.

King and Chinese soloist to per-fection.

Sarah Maggetti as Clara ex-ercised great concentration, stay

and Cavalier.

and Cavalier.

A strong dancer, Edwards seemed to fly through the air with ease as he executed the high, sustained grand jetes across the stage.

Tracey's performance, however, left a lot to be desired. It was marred by the stiffness of her arm, hand positions and movements

ments. Classical ballet demands grace-

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fulness. Tracey destroyed the ethereal, entrancing melody of Tchaikovsky's music and the pure beauty of movement in the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy." She desporately needs to attend to the carriage of her orms, to develop fluid movement in these areas by working in front of a mirror.

areas by working in front of a mirfor.

Behind me, the mother of a
young ballet student unable to
put her finger on the exact problem remarked — "I've never seen
a ballerina with such skinny
arms," but lack of body mass was
not Tracey's problem. Her arms
and hands were anything but
graceful. They were downright
distracting as she danced the part
the audience had waited for all
evening.

Next year the Livonia Symphony will add a second performance of the "Nutcracker," on Saturday night, said LSO president Kon Kelsey of Farmington Hills. Perhaps next year, the Contemporary Civic Ballet Company should think about using a Sugar Plum Fairy from its ranks since many of its soloists denced with flowing movement much greater than Tracey, the imported star.

Linda Chomin of Plymouth is a free-lance uniter who specializes in the arts and classical music.



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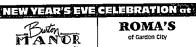
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