

ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1992

(F3B)

ON THE MARQUEE

Youth theater

Nancy Gurwin Productions is holding open auditions for the upcoming youth theater company Tedd E. Bear production of the musical "Beauty and the Beast," 10 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 27 and 5:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 28 in room 150 of the Jewish Community Center, 6609 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Auditions for boys and girls ages 8 to 17, singers, actors, dancers. There is a \$5 audition processing fee. Call Nancy Gurwin for more information, and an appointment 352-2797 or 354-0545. Show opens Feb. 17.

Birmingham Theatre

Roy Cooney's riotous comedy "Two Into One," opens a five week engagement at the Birmingham Theatre, 211 S. Woodward, Dec. 30 through Jan. 31. Tickets available at the Birmingham Theatre Box Office and all Ticketmaster outlets. Call 644-3533.

Plymouth Oratorio

The Plymouth Oratorio Society will begin its seventh season with rehearsals 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 4. Rehearsals will be at St. John Neumann Catholic Church, 4490 Warren, between Canton Center and Sheldon roads in Canton. The society is open to all interested singers without audition. Scores will be available at the first rehearsal. For information, call the director, Robert Pratt, 761-2991 or Mary Bozell, business manager, 455-6512.

Trinity House

Trinity House Theatre of Livonia announces open auditions 7:30-10 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 4 and 5, for "Quilters," a musical that tells the tales of a pioneer woman and her six daughters, set in the American frontier. Roles available for seven women of varying ages with musical and dance abilities. The auditions will be at Trinity House Theatre, 28840 W. Six Mile on the corner of I-275. Audition candidates are requested to bring a prepared vocal piece with sheet music. Wear comfortable clothes for movement. For information, call 464-6302.

Polish dinner

The American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple at Dequindre, Troy, will present its traditional holiday celebration of "Oplata," with traditional foods and music, Sunday, Jan. 10. Cost is \$17.50 and includes dinner and refreshments. Call 689-3636 for reservations.

Avon Players

Nell Simon's comedy "Rumors" will be presented by the Avon Players, weekends starting Jan. 8. Call 375-1990 for ticket information.



Gordon Reinhart of Westland stars in the Attic Theatre presentation of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," now playing at the Strand Theatre in downtown Pontiac.

If you're looking for some "good, clean, dirty fun," you'll enjoy Attic Theatre's presentation of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," running through Jan. 10 at the Strand Theatre, 12 N. Saginaw in downtown Pontiac.

Directed by Thomas M. Suda, this mixture of low comedy and high lyrics tells the story of a roguish slave who will be granted his freedom if he can secure his master's bride—a beautiful virgin who has been sold to a captain in the Roman Army.

The cast features Bart Hansard as Pseudolus and Gordon Reinhart of Westland as his "partner-in-crime" Hysterium. A graduate of the Hilberly Company, Hansard returns to Detroit from the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, Ga.

Also in the cast are Maria Bortell of Plymouth, Harry Wetzel, Roy Denison, Nancy Lipschultz, Eric Parker, Hunter Foster of Troy, Barbara Coven, Livonia residents Brent Billock and Susan Felder, Wendy Shihoro of Birmingham, and the zany chorus of singers and dancers ever assembled in an Attic Theatre production.

Musical direction is by Jim Holmeyer, and choreography is by Patrick Brewis.

With a book written by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart of M.A.S.H. fame, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" is played in grand vaudeville style, appropriate for a show that celebrates the varieties of broad humor that have been entertaining audiences ever since heel was first applied to banana peel.

Luft and laughter make this particular world go round. "Forum's" hilarious ingredients include classic comedy bits, mistaken identities, and a wild chase scene with lots of doors.

There will be a special performance of the show on New Year's Eve followed by a "Toga Party" featuring food, drink, dancing and entertainment by the "Forum Five." The cost is \$75 per person, togas optional.

Regular performances run Wednesday through Sunday, with no performance on Christmas Eve, Christmas or New Year's Day. Talk back sessions with the director and cast take place after each Thursday evening performance.

To order tickets, or for more information on the New Year's Eve "Toga Party" call the Attic Box Office at 875-8284, the Strand Box Office at 335-8100 or any Ticketmaster outlet at 645-6656.



Musical comedy: Bart Hansard, left, and Maria Bortell in a scene from the Attic Theatre presentation of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum."

Chorus performs piece by local composer



MARY JANE DOERR

Everyone wonders what it was like to have lived at the same time as the great masters, and comparisons with today's composers is intangible. But it is always exciting to hear the premiere of new music.

This area has an exceptional group of fine composers, such as Timothy R. Smith whose "Five Christmas Poems for Voices & Strings" was premiered recently at the Congregational

Church of Birmingham.

Smith, a Rochester composer who has achieved enough popularity writing music for events such as Detroit A-Glow and commercials, to support a wife and two children, was commissioned by the Great Lakes Men's Chorus to write a Christmas Cantata for their seasonal concert.

This five-part, 15-minute piece, setting to music five poems about Christmas, is contemporary but melodic and rhythmic. For this performance, the exceptionally fine chamber music group, Cassini Ensemble, showed Smith to be a composer who has learned his lessons

well from Stanley Hollingsworth, resident composer at Oakland University in Rochester Hills with whom Smith studied composition for his master's degree.

The string solos made a strong impression, in the orchestral parts of "There is No Rose" and "What Can I Give Him" and the solos for the violins and lead violinist Charles Roth.

It was not Smith's intention to have written such strong, commanding solos for the strings but to have more of an equal blend of the stringed ensemble and the vocalists. The Cassini Ensemble sang so well blended, the softer, natural harmony of the

Great Lakes Men's Chorus was overpowered.

Unfortunately for most of the evening this instrumental ensemble set dormant until they offered a wonderful bowed (not plucked) version of the Pachelbel Canon in D.

According to musical director Keith A. Koster, the chorus is enlarging and may even consider including women singers in the future.

Mary Jane Doerr of Troy is a full-time teacher and freelance writer who specializes in opera and musical theater. To leave a message for her, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1855.

First Night offers family fun New Year's Eve

Improved food service, expanded shuttle bus service, more participatory activities, open skating and ice locations in Birmingham including the Community House, Crowley's Birmingham store, and Birmingham city hall.

On New Year's Eve, buttons will be available in downtown Birmingham at the First Night Celebration Center on the corner of Pierce and Merrill, across from the Pierce Street parking

\$7 and allows you access to First Night Entertainment sites. Buttons can be purchased in advance at many locations in Birmingham including the Community House, Crowley's Birmingham store, and Birmingham city hall.

On New Year's Eve, buttons will be available in downtown Birmingham at the First Night Celebration Center on the corner of Pierce and Merrill, across from the Pierce Street parking

structure, Seaholm High School, First Presbyterian Church, and the Ice Arena. Children under 5 are free. For more information, call 540-6688.

There's entertainment for all ages and tastes including jazz flutist Alexander Zonjic, Balalaika Orchestra of Detroit, Birmingham Village Players, Orelia Barnes, storytellers, and comedy.

"We added the gym at Seaholm High School which provides more

seating. The food service menu has been expanded to include pizza, Italian sausage, chicken, and salad. The concession stand at the ice area will also be open," said Jill Riddle, First Night producer.

You can bring your own skates, or rent them at the arena which will offer open skating 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Todd Eldredge and the Detroit Skating Club "Ice Revue of '92" will present three shows at the arena.

Advertisement for Mitch Housey's featuring New Year's Eve party, reservations accepted for early dinner, and contact information for Livonia.

Advertisement for Don Pedro's Authentic Mexican Cuisine featuring a Mexican Sampler for two for \$9.95 and lunch specials for \$3.29.

Advertisement for Kodak featuring a large image of a movie camera and promotional text about Kodak film and cameras.

Advertisement for Fonte D'Amore del Signore featuring a New Year's Eve Extravaganza with dinner, entertainment, dancing, and party favors.

Advertisement for Italian Cuisine featuring a Happy New Year celebration with American and Italian cuisine, dinner specials, and contact information for Plymouth, MI.

Advertisement for Kodak Invites You To The Movies, listing various Kodak camera models and their features, along with a list of dealerships across Michigan.