

UPCOMING THINGS TO DO

CLASSICAL

GROUP DU JOUR
Winter Fantasiae, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 7, Mercy Center, 28600 Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Tickets, \$10, students and seniors, \$8, call 478-2075.

RACKHAM STRING QUARTET
Schoolcraft College Music Club presents the Rackham String Quartet noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17 in the College's Forum Building Recital Hall, P630. The recital is free and open to the public. The college is at 18600 Haggerty, Livonia.

CRANBROOK MUSIC GUILD

Ying Quartet, 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16 in the library at Cranbrook House, Bloomfield Hills. Call 761-2435 for ticket information.

MUSICA VIVA
The Vogler String Quartet of Berlin, 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12 at Christ Church, Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills. Call 473-2228 for tickets.

THEATER

THEATER GUILD
"Two Rooms" by Lee Blessing opens 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5 at the Theater Guild Building, 15138 Beech Daley in Redford. Shows weekends through Feb. 20. For tickets, call 638-5678.

JEWISH ENSEMBLE
February Festival of New Plays, four works in progress 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays Feb. 3 through Feb. 24, Aaron DeRoy Theatre, Jewish Community Center, 6500 West Maple, West Bloomfield. 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Feb. 4 through Feb. 25 at Jimmy Prentiss Morris Branch, 15110 W. 10 Mile Oak Park. Tickets, \$5 at the door, 789-2900.

TRINITY HOUSE
"Quilters" opens 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26 at Trinity House Theatre, 38840 West Six Mile, and runs through March 27. For ticket information, call 464-6302.

Deadline for the Upcoming entertainment calendar is three weeks ahead of publication. Send items to be considered for publication to: Keely Wygonis, Entertainment Editor, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48160.

Good performances in dated story

Performances of the St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook production of "The Philadelphia Story" continue through Feb. 6 at the playhouse in Bloomfield Hills. For ticket information call 644-0527.

Sometimes even the best efforts cannot breathe sufficient life into hopelessly dated material. St. Dunstan's Guild of Cranbrook makes a valiant effort with the classic "The Philadelphia Story," but this 1939 drawing room comedy fails to spark much excitement.

Is the story really worth retelling? According to director Charles Campbell, playwright Phillip Barry wanted to show that the rich only appear to have no problems, but are very human underneath. Now that the rich and famous are under constant media scrutiny, today's public is pretty jaded about their faults.

As a member of a prominent Main Line society family, Tracy Lord (Laura Raisch) seems to have everything — beauty, brains, breeding, and a stuffy fiancé (Roger Nowland) who fits

perfectly into her world. Tracy is in fact so perfect that she has no tolerance for imperfection in others.

This has already cost her one failed marriage as well as alienation from her philandering father (Tom Spriggs). Now, on the eve of her second marriage, she finally becomes humiliated when she's suddenly attracted to a cynical reporter who melts Tracy's upper crust.

Tom Christopher, another St. Dunstan's dependable, captures the ultra-chic sophistication of Dexter, the ex-husband who always seems to be under foot. Jim Brooks could be much funnier as would-be licentious old Uncle Willie if he weren't endued with lines like, "What's a no?"

Spriggs looks every inch the priggish father alongside Kappy Pennington as his quietly suffering wife. Janie Castagna is fine as Liz, the tough-cookie photographer.

The production is visually excellent, with the new set design by Bob Raisch and costumes supervised by Jamie Richards and Pam Richards perfectly capturing the era.

date at St. Dunstan's. Another standout is Christina Rowell as Tracy's kid sister Dinah, pert, bubbly and eminently believable.

Nowland is well-cast as the starchy, unforgiving fiancé, Andres, always a reliable talent at St. Dunstan's, never quite seems comfortable as the hard-bitten reporter who melts Tracy's upper crust.

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