## Six Degrees of Separation' provokes audience

Performances of "Six Degrees of Separation," at the George Burns Theatre for the Performing Arts in Livonia continue through Feb. 14. For tichet information, call 800-598-8000 or Tichetmaster, 313-



"Trashy, obscene, disgusting, pornographic"— these are words my audience — Observer & Eccentric readers, used to & Eccentric readers, used to describe "Six Degrees of Separation," starring Marlo Thomas and Ned Schmidtke.

Our Livenia office was flooded with calls last Thursday and Friday from people who were angry, embarrassed and shocked after seeing the show opening night, Wednesday, Feb. 3.

opening night, Wednesday, Feb.

"Why didn't you mention anything about the simulated home-sexual sex scene, the naked man running around stage, and profanity in your story?" they demanded to know. The truth is I wrote the story before seeing the play, after a telephone interview with Marlo Thomas, and I was just as surprised as they were.

Lots of people left before the show ended. The theater got cells, and added "for mature audiences only," to the marquee last Thursday.

It was obvious — many went expecting to see Marlo Thomas, you know "That Girl," and she wesn't there.

"Six Degrees of Separation," written by John Guare, tells the story of a young black man Paul (Mark Daniel Cade) who assumes the guise of Sidney Politer's son as he invades the lives of some of Manhattan's prominent residents, including Ouissa (Marlo Thomas) and her art dealer husband, Flanders Kittredge (Ned Schmidtke).

There were children in the audience, some as young as 7, some in their teens. Outraged parents wanted to know why theater isn't rated like movies. Outraged

in the future, warn ticket buyers if a show contains mature subject matter. Let parents, who might not be familiar with the play, then decide if it is something they want their children to see. But to reveal specifics is a mistake.

In this case, it would have taken away the shock — an important part of the play's message. "Six Degrees of Separation" shakes people up. The sexual issues are a very small part of this 90-minute drame.

The play is funny and serious. It forces the audience to consider different ways they are separated

adults said they felt like they'd been duped.

Theater management should, in the future, warn ticket buyers the first the same.

If you go to the show, go with an open mind, listen to what the characters are saying to each

Like the abstract, two-sided painting by Wassily Kandinsky that hangs over stage, it is a reminder that things aren't always what they seem, and that there are two sides to every story.

## Serenade your Valentine

Spirit of Detroit-Sweet Adeline Chorus is once again offering De-troit area lovebirds a unique way of saying 'you are special to me.' Quartets from the chorus will be performing 'Singing Valen-tines,'' in homes and offices throughout the area. The \$25 cost includes a silk rose, and tape of

the event. Phone-o-grams as available for \$10. For information call 862-6227 or 595-4139.

Screnade vour sweetle in four part harmony by reserving a quar-tet 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Feb. 12 and 13, and noon to 9 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 14.

## Captivating cast in Theatre Guild's hostage-taking drama

Performances of the Theatre
Guild production of "Two Rooms"
continues through Feb. 20 at the
Theatre Guild ployhouse in Redford. For ticket information call
the bax office at 533-5678.

If you doubt that
we live in a global village, then
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the Theatre
Guild's engrossing production of
"Two Rooms."
Playwight Lee Playwright Lee Blessing gives us four riveting

WEIDEL characters caught up in that odious phenomeyears: hostage taking.
Director, Rebecca Smith's stuging on essentially a bare playing area, together with LaDonna Long's lighting design create an

interwining mood of reality and illusion. Stripped of all humanizing amenities, at times we see acel in Beruit, Lebanon. At other times, it's the home of a wife in the United States who has removed everything from the room to empathize with her husband's plight.

As if through verbal letters to each other, we learn what it means to suddenly lose your freedom and your privacy. And to become little more than a pawn in a game of international politics and other people a sgendas.

Charles Van Hoose is excellent as the teacher (Michael Wells) in Beruit, who learns from his captors. We see why powerless people with longstanding grievances are capable of the most helnous crimes. Perhaps his best moments, however, are recalling the simple pleasures of touching, feeling, seeing and experiencing

life's many joys — especially the love for his wife.

Jennifer Jones is equally impressive as his wife, (Lainie) who mover gives up hope for his save return. Her first instinct is to seal herself away from the outside world. Soon, however, she is having to decide who can best help to free her husband: a zealous reporter, or a bureauerat from the state department. Jones gives a strong, consistent performance of a woman determined to do whatever it takes to free her husband.

David Rago is a bit frenzied at times as the reporter, (Walker Harris) but he does epitomize those in the press with limitless distrust of government, and boundless desire to get the story — no matter the pain and suffering to those involved. In this case,

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he wants to create a media event wise pass for headlines or to bring pressure on the govern-stories on the evening news.

he wants to create a media event to bring pressure on the government to make a deal for Michael Wells' release.
P.J. Jenkinson does a nice job as, Ellen Van Oas, the always incontrol state department official. She argues that Lainie Wells shouldn't make any statements which could upset negotiations—That Lainie Wells should keep the faith — That according to government calculations, time is on her side.
But what if there is a miscalculation. On our part. Or theirs, What if there is a miscalculation. On our port. Or theirs, which we want to be some capture of the control. There are no capy answers, but the Theatre Guild's "Two Rooms" gives a human dimension to what other-

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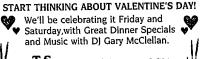


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