

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1993

ON THE MARQUEE



KEELY WYGONIK

Christmas recordings by local artists festive

Add "Have A Merry Christmas" and "Christmas Treasury," to your Christmas recording collection. Both are festive, full of good cheer, and produced by local talent. George London and Mary Livingston, members of Leather and Lace which performs 9 p.m. to 1:45 a.m. Tuesday through Sunday at Alibi Inn in Clinton Township, produced "Have A Merry Christmas."

It contains all your favorites — including "Sleigh Ride," "Jingle Bell Rock," "Let It Snow," and "Silent Night." "I loved the intro to "Sleigh Ride." You really feel like you're on a sleigh ride — the song begins with faint jingle bells, clip clop and realistic neighing of horses which gets louder as Mary Livingston begins singing the song, and fades as the song ends.

"Have A Merry Christmas" costs \$8 (cassette) and is available at Alibi Inn, 14 Mile at Grafton, 791-3562. Jazzy, and upbeat, "Have A Merry Christmas" offers fresh and creative interpretations of some of your favorite carols.

Internationally known pianist David Syme of West Bloomfield's "Christmas Treasury" features

See MARQUEE, 8B

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Entertainment next week:

- There's enchantment for young and old alike as "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp" takes the stage.
- Julia Roberts and Denzel Washington star in "The Pelican Brief" based on the best-selling novel of the same name.

JET's 'The Price' warm and witty



CATHIE BREIDENBACH

In theatrical heaven where actors lay claim to the characters they were born to play, Sol Frieder must have put his name on the role of the 89-year-old, Gregory Solomon, in Arthur Miller's "The Price."

Frieder's portrayal of the used furniture dealer in the Jewish Ensemble Theatre's finely-balanced production of Miller's play at the Aaron DeRoy Theatre in the Jewish Community Center, is so fluidly natural, so warm and witty, that the audience could easily decide only Sol Frieder may play Gregory Solomon forevermore.

Director Evelyn Orbach capitalizes well on the humor Solomon brings to Miller's serious drama about choices, and the price we pay for our illusions.

The Franz brothers, Victor (Robert Grossman) and Walter (David Fox), meet after a 16 year estrangement to sell the furniture that belonged to their father.

Victor's wife Esther (Yolanda Fleischer) and furniture dealer Solomon (Sol Frieder) complete the excellent cast of characters who confront their histories as they negotiate a price for the furniture in the house that will soon be torn down.

Set designer, Melinda Pacha's richly-detailed one-room set is filled with bourgeois treasures — a harp, an armoire filled with evening gowns, a fencing foil, a wind-up Victrola — that reveal the Franz family's aspirations before they lost their wealth.

In the crash of 1929, Victor and Walter's millionaire father lost his drive along with his fortune. Victor says of his father, broken by the depression, "Some men don't bounce."

The brothers' views of the life they shared years ago agree only on the facts — Victor quit college and joined the police force; Walter be-



Family drama: Robert Grossman as Victor (left to right), Yolanda Fleischer as Esther, Sol Frieder as Solomon and David Fox as Walter in the Jewish Ensemble Theatre production of "The Price."

REVIEW

come a rich doctor. They disagree about why their lives diverged, about who behaved decently and who didn't; about what manner of man their father was; and what choices they really had.

Victor holds Walter responsible for his lifetime on the force, a job he hates. Most of the time, Robert Grossman as Victor sounds entirely convincing as a man who learned to be tough from years of walking a beat. A few false moments temporarily undermine belief in his character as when he forces a laugh a fraction of a second too long, and when he repeatedly pronounces the word "ann" with elitist inflections so it comes out "ann."

The boys on the beat would never stand for such verbal snobishness. It rings false, even from the son of a millionaire and a cultured woman who played the harp.

David Fox, as Walter, the rich doctor, fluctuates between cajoling friendliness and harsh honesty as he tries to rebuild communication with his estranged brother.

The Jewish Ensemble Theatre's "The Price" combines inspired casting, a superb set, and sensitive directing in their production of this later, thought-provoking play by Arthur Miller.

JET invites audiences to Thursday-evening, after-performance discussions of the play led by a professional moderator on Dec. 9, 16 and 23. Those who attended performances on other dates are invited to return for the discussion.

ON STAGE

"THE PRICE"

- Theater: Jewish Ensemble Theatre at the Aaron DeRoy Theatre, Jewish Community Center, 6500 W. Maple, West Bloomfield.
- Curtain time: 8 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sundays through Dec. 26.
- Tickets: Range from \$8 to \$19.50 with discounts available to senior citizens, students and groups. Call 788-2900 or Ticketmaster, 645-6666.

Cathie Breidenbach of West Bloomfield teaches college writing classes and works as a freelance writer.

Found day care right away

Julia Pailon received 35 calls for her Observer & Eccentric Classified day care ad and called her response "Great!" Join Julia Pailon in discovering how great it is to Reach Michigan's Finest Suburban Market



The Ultimate Elf-Help Book

For easy, one-stop Christmas shopping, you can't beat the Entertainment* Book. With over 1,000 two-for-one and 50% off discounts for the very best in dining, travel, shopping, theatre, sports and more, it's the perfect gift for everyone. Don't get discouraged by crowded malls and long lines. Give Entertainment*.

Only \$40⁰⁰ Available through community groups and charitable organizations throughout your area. Or these fine stores:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| JCPenney | Sears | Crowley's |
| Kroger | Perry Drugs | Farmer Jack/A&P |
| Sav-On | Meller | Sav-Mor |
| Concord Drugs | Waldenbooks* | Ticketmaster |
| Damman Hardware | M&R Drugs | By Phone: (313) 645-6666 |
| | Major Malls | |

entertainment.
WE WROTE THE BOOK ON SAVINGS™

Call: (313) 637-8444



Hot Arts for a Cold Winter's Night!!

Join us on December 31st, from 4:00 p.m. to midnight, when the streets and select public buildings, churches, and schools in the downtown Birmingham area come alive with music and song, comedy and drama, magic and mirth.

First Night/Birmingham '94 is new and different this year! Shain Park will have outdoor performances all night long around the Celtic Stone Circle, the Oracle and the Resolution Cave Wall! And you can dance the night away to the sounds of The Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band, Nuevo Mundo Jazz Band, and The Big Picture or learn how to Country Line dance. Everyone in your family will enjoy this multi-cultural, community-based, alcohol-free New Year's Eve festival for just \$7! Children under 5 admitted free. Some First Night performances require free performance tickets, available for distribution Dec. 31.

OUR HEADLINERS INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Wendell Harrison Jazz Ensemble | Sally Rogers & Howie Bursen Family Oriented Folk Singers | The Winans Family Gospel Singers |
| Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band | Calypso/Reggae Band | Jeffrey Zook Classical Flutist |

FIRST NIGHT/BIRMINGHAM '94 is a non-profit event of the Cultural Council of Birmingham/Bloomfield, made possible by the generous contributions of individuals, civic and corporate organizations.

Major sponsors include: The Community House; D'Arcy, Masius Benton & Bowles; Bloomfield Community Television; Ford Motor Company; The Junior League of Birmingham; Kids Kab; The Kroger Company; The Lyon Foundation, Inc.; Maple Grove Centers/Henry Ford Health System; The Observer and Eccentric Newspapers; Target Stores; WJBK TV-2; WJOL; and WLTJ

\$7
ADMISSION
BUTTONS

Available in Birmingham at: AAA Michigan, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, Crowley's Ice Arena, Michigan National Banks, Jacobson's National Banks, Store, Kroger stores in Birmingham, Bloomfield, Farmington, and Madison Heights.

For More Information Call 540-6688