

Cast makes best of ridiculous story

It's Monday morning. You're a typically wealthy Westchester County housewife, busily preparing for another day of charity work, self-improvement classes and other vacuous, but time-killing, activities.

Your routine is suddenly and loudly interrupted by an unwitting guest, your new ultra-hip neighbor, just off the pick-up truck from Texas. This boorish lumineer won't leave you alone, and by the end of the week you've slept with her husband, been abandoned by yours, and are

REVIEW

spending your weekends running up massive credit card bills at Manhattan hot spots.

Sarah Kamoos, as the put-upon Maude Mix and Margaret Gilkes as the imposing Hannah Mae Bindler are so engaging that they almost make this ridiculous story worth watching in the Farmington Players' current production of "A Couple White Chicks Sitting Around Talking." John Ford Noonan's mercifully short play is one of those pseudo-dramas of the 1970s which was thought to be worthy simply because it embraced trendy feminist themes. Don't get me wrong, the story of a woman finding the courage and soul needed to declare her inde-

ON STAGE

"A COUPLE WHITE CHICKS SITTING AROUND TALKING"

★ Theater: Farmington Players at the Player's Barn, 32332 Twelve Mile Road, west of Orchard Lake Road.

★ Curtain time: 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 7 p.m. Sundays through Dec. 18. Matinee 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12.

★ Tickets: \$8, call 553-2955.

pendence from a man can make for outstanding theater ("A Doll's House," or "Quilters" for example), but "A Couple White Chicks" doesn't offer much more substance than an old rerun of "Maude."

However, rather than dwelling on an empty and dated script, let me tell you about two fine actresses. I've seen Gilkes before on the Farmington stage, and she possesses the warmth, earthiness and timing needed in a good comedy. In this show she manages to play a loud, twangy busybody (who never bothers to knock before entering) without seeming

overbearing. In fact, she is quite likable.

Farmington's newcomer Kamoos does an excellent turn as an ambitious, educated career woman who, alas, has no career. She is physically stunning, with a fiery personality to match.

The two work well together, especially in a well-staged fight scene in the second act. There are a few spots where you get the feeling that nobody (possibly including the playwright) was sure whether a scene should be played for laughs or tears, and that does give the production an slightly awkward feel.

Technical aspects of the show are good, from an attractive and realistic kitchen set to the rock 'n' roll interludes which introduce each scene.

I've said this before, but the Farmington Players usually do their best work when they challenge themselves.

Mark S. Curley is active in local community theater, both onstage and behind the scenes. He is a member of the Birmingham Village Players and Ridgedale Players in Troy.

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solemn, soulful piano interpretations of "Silent Night," Schubert's "Ave Maria," "O Holy Night," "Amazing Grace," "The First Noel," and other carols. Play it while you're addressing Christmas cards, wrapping gifts or at family gatherings. Syme puts a lot of heart into this tape, you'll be counting your blessings and thinking about Christmas past and present.

"I wanted the tape to convey some of the deeper feelings of Christmas, to stir the heart and stand the test of time," said Syme. "I picked timeless songs that you can listen to over and over again."

David Syme's "Christmas Treasury," is available on cassette tape (\$10) or CD (\$15) at Harmony House, Dearborn Music and Musicland. If you have trouble finding it, call 1-800-321-PIANO.

World Wide Financial Services recently donated \$15,000 to the Jewish Ensemble Theatre to sponsor Arthur Miller's "The Price," playing through Dec. 26 at the Aaron DeRoy Theatre in the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield.

"More companies should get involved, and help to promote the utility of cultural organizations," said Jack Wolfe, president of World Wide Financial Services, Inc., a three-year-old Birmingham-based mortgage lender which has given more than \$100,000 this year to several different charities representing a variety of causes.

"We believe it is our responsibility to give back to the communities in which we live and work," said Wolfe, "and funding for cultural organizations is often taken for granted, so World Wide Financial Services is trying to make giving to the arts part of our corporate culture."

Target is also sponsoring "The Price." When Target first opened its doors in 1962, the company made a commitment to be involved; to support and strengthen the communities in which it does business.

Keely Wygonik is editor of the Taste and Entertainment sections of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. She welcomes your calls and comments, 833-2105, fax 591-7279, or write Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc. 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

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