

ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1994

ON THE MARQUEE



KEELY WYGONIK

Musicians gather for classical reunion

Musical colleagues Dobra Fayroin, Patricia McCarty and Maria Meiroles are getting together for a "Classical Reunion," 8 p.m. Friday, April 1, at the Detroit Chamber Winds Nightnotes Series concert at Eagonian World of Rugs in Birmingham. Refreshments served 8 p.m., followed by concert at 8:30 p.m. Admission is \$12. Call (810) 362-2622 for reservations.

The trio will be joined by violinist Jennifer Ross in a concert featuring the Brahms "Piano Quartet," op. 21. Fayroin is a cellist in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and artistic director of the Nightnotes Series. McCarty is a concert violinist, Meiroles, a pianist, has performed throughout the western hemisphere. Ross has been a violinist with the Cincinnati and Honolulu Symphony orchestras, and is currently concertmaster of the Vermont Symphony.

Speaking of reunions, Daniel Cooney of Westland is returning to the Fisher Theatre in Detroit with the cast of "Evita," April 12-17. Cooney is outstanding in his role as Che. Donna Marie Ashbury reprises her depiction of Eva Peron, which wowed Fisher Theatre audiences in September. David Brummel plays Peron. Tickets are now on sale, call (810) 645-6666 or (313) 872-1060. Don't miss a second chance to see Cooney in this Andrew Lloyd Webber hit musical.

Cranbrook Music Guild continues its 42nd season 8 p.m. Tuesday, April 5 with a homecoming concert by the Lafayette String Quartet in the library of Cranbrook House. Call (810) 751-2435 for ticket information.

Quartet in Residence at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, the Lafayette String Quartet was previously in residence at the Center for Creative Studies — Institute of Music and Dance in Detroit, and Oakland University in Rochester.

Violinists Ann Elliott-Goldschmid and Sharon Stanis, violinist Joanna Hood, and cellist Pamela Highbaugh, formed the quartet in 1984 when they came to Detroit as members of the Renaissance City Chamber Ensemble. They have won numerous prizes and international recognition. Tuesday's program will open with the Mozart Quartet in D Major, K. 499, and close with the C Major "Beethoven" Quartet, op. 59, no. 3 of Beethoven.

Ars Poetica Chamber Orchestra, an ensemble of professional musicians from the United States

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LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Entertainment next week:

- What's new at the movies.
- Upcoming plays and concerts in your community.

Kids won't leave parents alone in comedy



VICTORIA DIAZ

If you have kids, and sometimes believe that their main calling in life is to make you crazy.

The play, directed by Maureen Cook, goes something like this: Middle-aged, middle-class Californians George and Helene Butler have been married over 30 years. They've spent much of that time raising three sons, the first of which made his appearance about nine months after their wedding day.

As "Alone Together" opens, their youngest son, Keith, is finally out the door and off to college. Now, Mom and Dad (though they admittedly have mixed feelings about his departure) can look forward to taking that trip they've always dreamed of, have that wine-and-candlelight dinner they've been waiting for all these years, or make out in front of the fireplace if they feel like it.

Yeah, sure they can. Just as they're about to get down to some serious romance, their oldest son, Michael, shows up with some big problems. Among these

problems is the unbearable (to him) winter weather in Massachusetts, where he's just quit his teaching job at MIT. ("We didn't raise a son. We raised a citrus fruit," laments his mother.)

Hot on his heels, younger brother, Elliott, returns, too. Seems he has been rejected by his wife in Texas for a persistently wandering eye, and has come home to hang his ten-gallon hat. Recidivism reigns and, before it's over, the Butlers not only have grown sons returning home like boomstrange (the youngest comes back, too — he has a toothache), they also acquire a "daughter" who's seeking shelter.

At Helene, Susie Gardiner gets off to a rather lackluster start, delivering her lines as if she were slightly tired or maybe even a little bored. As things move on, however, she manages to get into the zany spirit of the play, and to imbue her role with a nice mix of gladness, sadness, razor's-edge madness. She has wonderfully expressive eyes, and some



DAN DRASSTAFF PHOTOGRAPHY

Family drama: Ron Hall as Michael (left), Terry Frier (George) and Susie Gardiner (Helene) argue after Michael informs them that he has dropped out of college, in a scene from the Village Players' "Alone Together."

of her best moments come when she says nothing, but simply reacts worthily to the confusion around her.

As the long-suffering father, George, Terry Frier pretty much follows her lead. Ho, too, seems to have trouble getting started right. But once she's on her way, he manages to keep up well, although one keeps wishing he'd appear just a bit more energetic in his fatherly exasperation.

Ron Hall (Michael), Y. Jamie Mistry (Elliott), and Ryan Martin (Keith) turn in nice performances as the three grown sons who believe there's no place like the house they

grew up in. If mosquitoes could talk, they would sound like Susan Putok's Jamie Johnson. In a comparatively brief role, Putok definitely makes her mark as the Butler's scantily-clad "star boarder."

With the exception of a few regrettable sound effects, the Village Players of Birmingham appear to have given close attention to peripherals. The attractive "California Contemporary" set adds liveliness to the production.

Victoria Diaz is a Livonia-based freelancer, who specializes in arts and entertainment articles in the metro area.

ON STAGE

"Alone Together"

*Theater: Village Players, 752 Chestnut Street, corner of Hunter Boulevard, south of Maple Road, Birmingham.
*Curtain Time: 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, April 1-2.
*Tickets: Adults \$10, students \$8. Call 644-2075.

Dramatic stage design sets scene for drama

By SANDRA DALKA-PRYSBY
SPECIAL WRITER

It wasn't going to be just another traditional set. And it definitely wasn't the usual technical requirements. That's what Timothy Hughes and Lucy Mayo discovered when they signed up to work on the Royal Oak Stagecrafters' production of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

"I wanted to do something quite different, something really dramatic, in terms of set design," said Hughes of Rochester. "Luckily, the director allowed me to create the usual set that has lots of different levels and platforms, some of which are sloping. In addition, the focus of the set is a crown of thorns that is nine feet in diameter."

While Hughes was designing the set, technical director Lucy Mayo of Southfield was busy trying to figure out how to "hang" two of the actors in the play. "This is the first time I have had to 'hang' anyone, so I went to a wilderness store for assistance," she said.

"I decided that a harness used by a sky divers would be suitable for the

ON STAGE

"Jesus Christ Superstar"

*Theater: Royal Oak Stagecrafters, 415 South Lafayette Avenue.
*Curtain Time: 8 p.m. Thursday March 31 and April 7, and weekends through April 17. Sunday show times vary.
*Tickets: Range from \$10 to \$12. Call (810) 541-6430.



Super set: Timothy Hughes of Rochester developed this set for Royal Oak Stagecrafters' production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Jesus Christ Superstar."

actor playing Judas, who 'hangs' himself after he betrays Jesus. This type of harness balances the body at the shoulders so it helps create a realistic-looking 'hanging by the neck.' We are using a mountaineer's harness, worn backwards, to hang Judas on the cross. This harness puts the body weight on the waist."

Although she has been a member of Stagecrafters for just one year, Mayo has worked backstage on more than 100 community theater productions, primarily in Cleveland where this computer programmer formerly lived. "I have no desire to perform on

stage," she said. "I am very happy working on the technical requirements such as lighting, props and carpentry."

Hughes said that although he had one "walk on" part in a play, he, too, likes working on the sets. "I have de-

signed more than 12 sets since I joined the Stagecrafters nine years ago," he said. "I am fortunate because I am able to be creative and move away from more traditional set designs," said the chemical technician.

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3:00 pm

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