

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 1994

# ENTERTAINMENT

## ON THE MARQUEE



Kately Wygonik

## Local dancers shine in romantic ballet

Fairy tales come true for dancers in the Michigan Opera Theatre production of "Cinderella" at the Masonic Temple May 6-8. It was a spectacular show that featured 63 dancers and five supernumeraries. Ballet master Jacob Lascu of West Bloomfield directed the cast that included dancers chosen locally from the Birmingham Dance Academy, Dunny Santoni Studio (Livonia), the Center for Creative Studies, Dance Detroit, Festival Dancers, Lascu School of Ballet, Madame Cadillac Dancers, Marygrove College and the Metropolitan Ballet Theatre.

Evelyn Cisneros of the San Francisco Ballet was beautiful as Cinderella, and Wolfgang Stollwitzer was very believable as Prince Charming.

There are many talented dancers in the Observer & Eccentric coverage area, two performances are scheduled this weekend. The Plymouth-Canton Ballet Company will present the ballet "Coppelia," 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 14, at Belleville High School Auditorium, 501 W. Columbia. Reserved seating tickets are \$8 adults, \$6 children and senior citizens. Call (313) 397-8828.

Cranbrook Kingswood's annual spring dance concert, featuring modern dance by the Cranbrook Kingswood Dancers, will be 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 12-14, at the Cranbrook Performing Arts Center, 550 Lone Pine, Bloomfield Hills. Tickets are \$4 and available at the door. Call (810) 645-3441 for information.

If you didn't reserve tickets for the Ridgevale Player's current production of "The Foreigner," you're out of luck. They sold out. "We have an outstanding cast, and it's a very funny and well-known show," said director Jim Rink. The Ridgevale Players is at 205 W. Long Lake Road in Troy. The Junior Actors of Ridgevale will be presenting "Robin Hood" June 25-26. Stay tuned to Entertainment for details.

Alanna Hamill has been infatuated with the movies for as long as she can remember, said her father, Desmond Hamill of West Bloomfield. She worked in amateur productions at Mercy and University of Detroit high schools and Marygrove College. After performing for several years off-Broadway, she headed for her true love — Hollywood. She has been working there steadily ever since, but not as an actress. When acting parts weren't available, she, with partner Robert Fucci, wrote a screenplay about a precocious child actor.

Director Taylor Hackford bought it for New Vision Pictures, and they were on their way. They felt that high-budget action pictures were being overdone, so they concentrated on romantic comedy and suspense thrillers.

See MARQUEE, next page

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Entertainment next week:

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

# Seamstress is devil's advocate in 'Faust'



MARY JANE DOERR

With "a stitch in time," University of Detroit fine arts graduate Mary Ellen Shindel of Rochester dresses opera singers to the "nines." Working with five other seamstresses in Michigan Opera Theatre's costume shop, the wardrobe mistress meticulously builds her creations, carefully reinforcing linings and allowing for alterations with large seams and long hems.

The latest artistic offerings from the shop in the old Packard plant in Detroit are the 16 costumes for leads of Saturday night's "Faust" production at Masonic Temple.

Shindel made the vest that goes with Meophilosophia's \$3,000 wings, his \$2,000 leather coat, horned top hat, and bodysuit that looks like a satyr (with a cloven hoof).

"It is the best costume I have ever worn," said Gabor Andras, who is singing the role of the devil, "Faust" by Charles Gounod is a twist on the ancient story of a man who trades his soul for youth, a story immortalized by Johann Goethe. This current production, a joint effort by MOT and Opera Pacific, is the exciting concept of Ken Cazan, who sets by Paul Steinberg based upon MOT's 1977 version of the opera.

Last fall when it opened in California, the costumes proved such a sensation, especially the six demon costumes, they were immediately rented to the Greater Michigan.

"You sew a dress, but you build a costume," said Shindel in a midnight interview after "Cinderella." "A costume is built for abuse."

## ON STAGE

### "Faust"

\*Theater: Michigan Opera Theatre presentation at the Masonic Temple, 500 Temple, Detroit.

\*Curtain time: 8 p.m. Saturday, May 14; 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 18; 6 p.m. Saturday, May 21 and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 22.

\*Tickets: Range from \$11 to \$63. Children all with their parents for only \$10 each. (On the purchase of one or more full-priced adult tickets. Students and seniors may purchase half-price tickets one hour prior to curtain, subject to availability. Call 674-5943 or Ticketmaster, 645-6600.



Costume fitting: Wardrobe mistress Mary Ellen Shindel of Rochester fits Wendy Shapiro of West Bloomfield with her costume as a demon in MOT's production of "Faust."

## PREVIEW

Abuse is what the demon costumes got. After they were carefully constructed for a price of \$25,000 according to costume designer Constance Hoffmann's designs, they were shredded in keeping with production director Ken Cazan's erotic ideas. These six demons (people from hell) come from different historical periods, and follow Meophilosophia throughout the show. The seven represent the seven evils.

"All of my life in the theater I have been an ingenue," said Wendy Shapiro of West Bloomfield who is one of the demons, a seductress in a red dress with horns. "Now I have the chance to explore my darker side. In the show I am constantly licking my stiletto full of blood."

Shapiro, a graduate of UD-Mercy in theater, has choreographed produc-

tions at the Birmingham Theatre, the Strand Theatre, and for Stevenson High School in Utica. She is studying voice with Rita Jury of Bloomfield Hills, who is in the "Faust" chorus.

"Even the poor people wear silk in the theater," said Shindel. "We have to use expensive materials because the costumes have to drap right and stand the wear and tear."

The materials used in this "Faust" production were bought in New York for between \$4 and \$50 a yard. They are of silk, velvet, leather, and fake fur. (Some people are allergic to real fur.) After the Detroit run, the cos-

tumes will be housed at the costume shop and rented to opera companies. "Yes, I love what I do," said Shindel who costumes for the Sarasota Opera during MOT's off season, and dresses celebrities like Kevin Costner (Phantom in "Phantom of the Opera") during shows at Masonic Temple, the Fox Theatre, and the Fisher Theatre.

"If I can't be on stage, then I want to be back stage," said Shindel.

Mary Jane Doerr of Troy is a full-time teacher and freelance writer who specializes in opera and musical theater. After the Detroit run, the cos-

# SRO's 'Ten Little Indians' is entertaining



SALLY DUBATS

"Ten Little Indians" is perhaps Agatha Christie's best known mystery, and Standing Room Only Productions presents a fairly attractive rendering of her work.

"Ten Little Indians," exemplifies a classic mystery formula from which much subsequent entertainment still springs. Unsuspecting guests are invited to a country home on an island from which there is no escape. One of them is a murderer. With that backdrop, Christie employs the children's nursery rhyme by the same title to develop her plot.

Judie Rosati directs an artistically and technically solid production with one crucial exception: a standard tool of Christie mysteries is that each character should appear guilty (through gestures, glances, or delivery of lines) to create more dramatic tension and a greater sense of "whodunit" for the audience.

As all characters appear seemingly innocent by their interpretations (rather than reading at least a few lines as though they were lying), some

## ON STAGE

### "Ten Little Indians"

\*Theater: SRO Productions at theburgh on the northeast corner of Civic Center Drive and Berg Road in Southfield.

\*Curtain time: 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays, through May 22.

\*Tickets: General admission, \$7, senior citizens and children, \$6. Call 354-6262.

## REVIEW

audience mental sleuthing is missing from this production.

The remaining multi-faceted interpretations of the characters, however, are intact which does create mystery, wit, sarcasm, humor, dash, prudish behavior and cunning create other character dimensions to round out SRO's production.

Guests gather and recount the reason for their visit to the gloomy estate. Joel Grossman does a splendid job as newly arrived Sir Lawrence Wargrave. Grossman possesses a fine

A terrific performance is turned in by Marc Rosati who plays William Blore, a strange policeman who obviously doesn't fit in with the upper crust crowd. Rosati's performance provides wonderfully witty comic relief.

sense of command as the self-appointed interpreter of various ghastly events.

Sarah Kamoo also performs well as the confident and pretty secretary Vera Claythorne who later cracks under pressure. Kamoo is paired well with Michael Megerian who plays the part of Phillip Lombard, a wise-cracking playboy type make likable by a cunningly casual interpretation.

A terrific performance is turned in by Marc Rosati who plays William Blore, a strange policeman who obviously doesn't fit in with the upper crust crowd. Rosati's performance provides wonderfully witty comic relief, especially since snappy gestures and quickly looks dominate Rosati's version of Blore.

Otto Canis portrays the nervous Dr. Armstrong, and plays him with an on-the-link hysteria that is perfectly suited to the character. Canis' nervousness peaks when an unsuspect-

ing guest dies as the result of a lethal injection from a hypodermic needle, making Dr. Armstrong the perfect suspect.

Jim Cave turns in an excellent characterization of house guest General Mackenzie. Displaying excellent ability, Cave fares well with the doddering General, although a bit too quick to create suspicion.

Ralph Rosati and Cheryl Glicker add a nice element of color to the production portraying the obligatory Christie domestic help.

As is customary for an SRO production, Bill Mandl's act is a terrific asset to the mood of the show.

With respectable performances by all (including nifty British dialects), SRO's "Ten Little Indians" is an entertaining Christie diversion.

Sally Dubats of Royal Oak is an actress, director and teacher, who teaches at community theaters in the metropolitan area.

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