Powerful voices put muscle into 'Samson'

Michigan Opera Theatre presents "Samson and Delliah," 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 11-12, and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 13, at the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway (one block east of Woodward Avenue), Detroit. Tickets \$18-\$95, call (313) 237-SING or (248) 646-6866 BY MARY JANE DOERR SPEZUL WENTE.

Those Philistines really know how to throw a smashing good party. In their shimmering gold costumes, with exotic ballet dancers, the mammeth gold gilded temple columns, and choral singing that literally roised the roof, it made the Dotroit Opera House stage look like something out of a Cecile B. DeMille film.

Then in the middle of all this frivolity, suddenly the gold costumes turn to brilliant aqua and this hefty Hobrew Samson crashes the party. He was a real hit.

between these dynamic voices in the clash of wills, passion and powerful singing.

Mishura was silky smooth in her seductive "Mon cocur, souvre a ta voix." Samson's costume gave an awkward impression rather than one of masculine strength. As the Samson trying to gain Delilah's favor, Lundburg seemed ill at case in these seduction scenes though his singing was powerful. His aria in the millstone scene was touching.

"Samson and Delilah" is simply a fabulous mix of tension and excitement. The action of this familiar biblical story moves quickly. What is surprising is the composer's use of oratorio style with the choruses.

Opera House stage look like something out of a Cecile B. DeMille film.

Then in the middle of all this frivolity, suddenly the gold costumes turn to brilliant aqua and this hefty Hebrew Samson crashes the party. He was a real hit.

Let us all drink to this Court of Dagon and Irina Mishura. As the seductress Delilah in Michigan Opera Theatre's production of Saint-Sacas' Samson and Delilah, "the Bloomfield Hills mezzesoprane sizzled in her performance Saturday evening, bringing to doom the strong man Samson of the Hebrews — kind of a Monica Lewinsky of the ancient world.

Mishura is beautiful, and costumed in fuchsia, she commanded the action during the entire second act. She out maneuvered Samson, sung by Mark Lundburg and matched up boautifully with Gregg Baker as the High Priest of Dagon. Together their Act 2 duet "If Saut, pour assouvir ma baine" was the evening's climax.

Baker has as much musele in his voice as he does in his biceps, something we got a better glimpse of in his magnificent past performances of Crown, and John the Baptist.

The electricity in the second act didn't come from the thunderstorm. It came from the friction

Fig. hor Scaccon because the second act didn't come from the thunderstorm. It came from the friction

Humidity dampens play at Outdoor Greek Theatre

St. Dunstan's presents "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" at 8:30 p.m. Thursday Saturday, June 10-12, at the Cranbrook Outdoor Greek Theatre, 400 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors ages 62 and older, and students ages 10 and older. For more information, call (248) 644-0827.

BY HELEN ZUCKEN.

BYCLAL WAITER

SPECIAL WATTER
S. Lunstan's attempt to exhume "How to
Succeed in Business Without Really Trying."
directed by Edgar A. Guest III and Peggy A.
Lee, gets an A for phenomenal effort and a C
for production.
The 29-member cast, the huge technical
staff and the musicians valiantly battled heat
and mosquitoes but seemed to have so much
on their minds that the drama behind this
musical has ne edge.

on their mines and musical has no edge.

Production values dominate. The set, designed by Michael J. Brooks and Nancy Craig, based on James Thurber drawings, is

ingenious.

Abo Burrows, Jack Weinstock, Willie Gilbert and Frank Loesser wrote the book and music for "flow to Succeed" at a time when many Americans, not only hippies and beatniks, were protesting against sexism, conformity and corporate values. Protest is lodged at the heart of this musical, but St. Dunstan's gives us a fond look at the end of the '50s, the beginning of the '60s.

us a fond look at the end of the '50s, the begining of the '60s.
Y. Jamie Mistry is spirited as Finch, the
beyish master of manipulation who works his
way from the mailroom to the boardroom.
Finch moves well, and he delivers a smooth
rendition of "I Believe In You," the show's best
song, Mistry seems like a nice guy though; it's
hard to believe he's Finch, a totally self-

Jan Casai as Rosemary, the secretary who

washer.

Jan Casai as Rosemary, the secretary who washer.

Jan Casai as Rosemary, the secretary who wants to marry Finch and move to New Rochelle, stands for everything Gloria Steinham marched to change. When Casai, a nice woman, sings "Happy to Keep His Dinner Warm" I couldn't help thinking of The Stepford Wives." Despite her wifely ambitions, Rosemary is supposed to be spunky.

Keith Lepard as Biggley, Finch's boss, is a walking cliché. He's meant to be, but Lepard takes it a bit too far. The fact that Lepard seems to be a kind man also gets in the way. Amy Lynn Smith is very fine as Smitty, Rosemary's sarcastic friend and fellow secretary. Smith seems to understand the world she inhabits, and she sings with energy.

Scott MacDonald as Frump, gives us a believable baby. As the nephew of the boss and Finch's rival, it's hard to believe he's "stupid," as Biggley keeps saying. Maybe masty Whntever, MacDonald is fun to watch as he winds himself into tantrums. Krystyn M. Irvine as the obligatory sexpot, the boss's mistress looking for "advancement" as a sceretary, tries on a Marilym Monroe hairdo, dress and walk. Irvine strains a bit, but is very cute as the Treasure girl who can't tell a lie on television.

Margie Brooks as Miss Jones, the soul of the coffeepot hour, and Biggley's secretary, and Heather Bell and Miss Krumholtz try to lend a bit of snap. John Roberts stands out as Bratt, the smarmy personnel manager, as does John Schore as Gatch.

Musical director John M. Tartglia conducted the mostly unmelodic score with energy.

Musical director John M. Tartaglia conducted the mostly unmelodic score with energy, and his orchestra was right there with him.

Fisher season heavy on the musicals

"Art" followed by musicals "Fosso" in March and "Cabaret" in April.
"Fostlosao" is basad on the 1984 movie about a free-spirited kid who reminds the town that it's no sin to be young, and 'footlosse." With solid-gold musical hits "Let's Hear It For The Boys," 'Holding Out for a Hero," 'Almost Paradise' and the tite song along with explosive dancing, it's a singing, swinging story with a heart.
December's offering is musical in a completely different mode. Martin Guerre, a soldier who returns after seven years at war has been reported dead. His wife accepts him but questions about his true identity begin to emerge. Composed by Alain Boubill and Claude-Michel Schonberg, creators of "Les Miscrables" and "Miss Saigon," "Martin Guerre" has drama and suspense

The Fisher Theatre's 19992000 Playgoer Subscription Season gives the audience what it wants: musicals.
It opens in October with "Footloose" and continues in December with "Martin Guerre." January brings the non-musical "Art" followed by musicals "Fosso" in March and "Cabaret" in April.
"Fostloose" is based on the 1984 movie about a free-spirited kid who reminds the town that it's no sin to be young, and "footloose." With solid-gold musical list. Let's Hear I't For The Boys."

The Resease Brondway theater

proces on many lovels. Art is a challenging, enticing and funny play.

Bob Fosso's Broadway theater credits reflect his originality, his fair, his flamboyance and his genius. The musical "Fosse" recreates his stunning dance numbers from stage, film and television. Numbers from "Sweet Charity," "Pippin," "Little Me," The Pajama Game," "Dancin" "All That Jazz," numbers Fosse performed on television's "The Ed Sullivan Show," The Colgate Comedy Hour," his choreography for "Liza with a Z" and a number he choreographed for Gwen Verdon for a 1968 Bob Hope special are only part of his legacy.

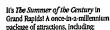
"Cabaret" is a musical that jolts its audience with shock and surprise. It was first produced in 1966, revived in 1987 and won the Tony Award for Best Revival of 1998. In its earlier production, the menace of Nazism was clear but less threatening. This one is bawdier, raunchier, with an overlay of approaching terror. It's a nowerfully realized show of enormous emotional strength. "Subscribbers receive priority seating, have full exchange privaleges, have their tickets sent to their home or office, receive advance notice of non-subscription shows, including more musicals this season, have a special subscriber telephone number and may renew their seate each season.

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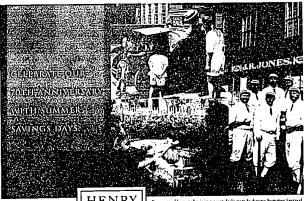
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