Theatre News

Fantasticks

By EUPHEMIA WYATT

THE FANTASTICKS — At the end of the nineteenth century, Rostand, the French poet who wrote CYRANO DE BERGERAC, saw his first play produced, a little comedy called LES ROMANESQUES. It has now been thoroughly aired, the campaign balls taken out and some attractive songs added to the accompaniment of a piano and harp but not a word of music in Monsieur Rostand is in the program. Perhaps because they know he is dead and the copyright run out.

The story, however, is the same. It might have been called THE WALL. Two neighbors who want their son and daughter to marry are so adept in adolescent psychology that they build a wall between their gardens and pretend to be a Capulet and Montague. The parental sequence is rewarded; the boy and girl fall deliciously in love and the problem then is how to bring about a happy ending without the fathers losing face.

Being French, they evolve the idea of an elaborate kidnapping — "rape" in poetry — from which the Boy can rescue the Girl and all can be forgiven. The songs and ballets in which the commercial "rape" is arranged and carried out is a mixture of music and musical comedy with two old actors adding to the laughs.

Peace and harmony reign. The wall is knocked down and then comes the anticlimax. The two old men get on each other's nerves, then start out the travels the lovers are furious and the Boy leaves home. Naturally he comes back but not until he and the Girl discover that the end of the nineteenth century, Rostand, the French poet, in a straight English translation. Rostand's gallery of characters and the sentiment are the eighteenth century. In Tom Jones' free and lusty French accompaniment added in shorts and pants, the characters grew in warmth and humor. A lot of pantomime remains, with the two men as the Narrator who is also the Bergamot.

The Girl has a Columbine name in white. The music by Harvey Schmidt is just exactly right — so is each member of the cast. Bernard Gassage has the credit of the first performance of this completely charming and melodious concept. FANTASTICKS is being presented in an air-conditioned theatre a few blocks south of Washington Square. This is a great production of all Broadway. At the Sullivan Street Playhouse.

Gantry Film Draws Fire

Durham — (RNS) — Showing of the controversial Hollywood film "Elmer Gantry," the story of a test evangelist, was strongly protested here by the Durham Conservative Ministers Association. Point of the association's objection was the use of a colyumed building, formerly a commercial theatre, to exhibit a picture which the group charged "discredits" Christianity.

The resolution noted that the seal and emblem of the ministry of the evangelical Christian church has been traditionally the Holy Bible in the hands of men." (In the film, Elmer Gantry often quotes from the Bible.)

"There has been a systematic effort" the ministers said, "to discredit both the evangelism and message of the Christian church by a shameless caricature in the Durham City Auditorium and spread abroad through large advertisements in the Durham newspapers.

Family Rosary Radio Program

Friday, Sept. 23 — George Phillips, Annunciation.

Saturday, Sept. 17 — Carmen Kesselring, Sacred Heart Cathedral, accompanied by Kesselring family members.

Sunday, Sept. 18 — Irene Kritikos, St. John the Evangelist, Greece.

Monday, Sept. 19 — Irving Mayer, St. Andrew's, accompanied by St. Thomas More Club.

Tuesday, Sept. 20 — Robert Berns, SS. Peter and Paul.

Wednesday, Sept. 21 — A representative of Holy Cross College Alumni Club of Rochester.

Thursday, Sept. 22 — William Kettler, Sacred Heart Cathedral, accompanied by Easter Products Employees.

Race Clinic Set At Batavia Downs

Batavia Downs will offer a series of two harness racing clinics on successive Saturdays with the public invited to participate.

Several trainers, drivers and other race officials will be on the panel to explain their duties, responsibilities and problems. Questions from the floor will be welcomed.

The outdoor clinics will be held in front of the Downs clubhouse at 2 p.m. Sept. 17 and Sept. 24. There is no admission charge.

Slated to take part in Saturday's first clinic are drivers Edson Hamer and John Schroeder, and veterinarian Dr. Irving Wiswall of Batavia. Chief topic will be training and driving harness horses.

Holiday Theatre Club Listed For Children

For a second year the magic world of the theatre will brighten winter holidays for Rochester children. Holiday Theatre Club will repeat with a series of five period music.

Saturday, Oct. 29, the traditional [illegible] Halloween with a [illegible] Sunday, Nov. 20, Thanksgiving with a [illegible] Friday, Nov. 25, Christmas with a show Tuesday, Dec. 27, and Easter with a show Tuesday, April 4. All programs will be staged in the Gannett Gloss Center auditorium.

PLANS FOR the membership drive have been announced by Martin T. Sherman, president, and wife of Gannett Theatre President, Conor K. Lennon.

"[illegible] nearly 1,000 children members in the two-week membership drive," said Mrs. Lennon. "This year we expect to sell our membership for one, one but two shows at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Admittance will be by membership only."

In addition to four regular events, Mrs. Lennon said club members have a membership party after the final matinee of each show, and are invited to see it free.

Each child will receive a Holiday Theatre Club badge for the year, and a special admission card to present at each performance. Finally, every member will be given a special gift with membership.

Anything Holiday Theatre Club is planning for Christmas week? Yes, a special Christmas Eve Theatre Party, Dec. 24. Tickets for ADULTS ONLY. Movie fans will be treated to the great film version of the play, West Side Story, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducting the music of The Nutcracker Suite. The program will be given at 1:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are now on sale at the Gannett Theatre Box Office. Reservations through Friday, Dec. 23. Tickets are limited.

125 Films Listed In NCCM Catalogue

New York — (NC) — The National Council of Catholic Men's 1960-61 film catalogue includes 125 films, most of them for the month of December programs.

The catalogue, which lists films that are recommended, classified by Catholic standards, as mentioned, [illegible] such as Cathedral, Shape of a Stranger, [illegible] Boys Town, as Caine, Caesar, Bernadette, [illegible] Sister, Church Mouse, Church Mouse, and Communion.

Among special films are the prize-winning "Bonne Espérance" series, "Family, USA," and the film Ave Maria Gracia's color paintings entitled "The Passion and Resurrection," and "The Sermon on the Mount."

Others include publications like Frank Sheed speaking on Christ, and Msgr. John J. Dougherty, president of Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J., speaking on Scripture.

Copies of the catalogue can be obtained from the Film Office, National Council of Catholic Men, 50 East 42nd St., New York 17, N.Y.

Batavia Downs Marks Anniversary

The twentieth anniversary of the start of night racing at Batavia Downs will be observed with a special program next [illegible], Sept. 23.

The [illegible] opened Sept. 22, 1940, [illegible] at New York State [illegible] the legislature, at [illegible] wagering on trotters and pacers.

A $7,500 Anniversary Trotter race will highlight the evening. In addition, a special parade program will be staged, using some of the highlights of Batavia's first seven. The parade will share in a huge anniversary cake marking the celebration.

Theatre Guide

RIVIERA

(Unobjectionable)

Ben-Hur A-1

(Unobjectionable)

Observation—The Legion of Decency recommends Ben-Hur as wholesome entertainment on an unusually high level of achievement for the whole family.

HALTO — Lou Rochester

The Story of Ruth A-1

My Dog Buddy A-1

Pogo and Bess A-2

(Unobjectionable for adults and adolescents)

Torch of Larceny A-2

(Unobjectionable for adults)

The Halto Theatre is to be commended for its policy of featuring only unobjectionable films and only showing films rated in the "A" classification by the Legion of Decency.

LOEWS

The Mountain Road A-2

Libel A-1

PARAMOUNT

The Crowded Sky A-3

CINEMA

The Subterraneans A-3

VILLAGE

The Last Race A-1

The Wild Unknown A-2

MONROE

Can-Can B

(Objectionable)

FINE ARTS

Strangers When We Meet B

Legion Of Decency

The following are the titles of the films reviewed this week to be used in their respective classifications of the Legion of Decency. The last column lists the classification — A-1 for both and sure.

Class A, Section 1

Franklin

Class A, Section 2

Man In A Cocked Hat

Sunset At Corralitos

Class B, Section 1

[illegible]

Two Operas Set At Eastman

The Civic Music Association will open its season with the presentation of two operas on Friday evening, Sept. 23, at 8:30 p.m. at the Eastman Theatre. The two operas are "Gianni Schicchi" by Puccini and "Pulcinella" by Stravinsky. They will both be sung in Italian by members of the New York Opera Festival company.

The New York Opera Festival is noted for its extensive style, [illegible] and delicate costumes and sets. The company will [illegible] with its own [illegible] and orchestra.

Watching The Screen

Fasten Seat-Belts

By RAY SMITH

Warner Brothers have added [illegible] to their [illegible] Fasten-your-seat-belts [illegible] HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL [illegible] The Paramount [illegible] Theatre for ADULTS ONLY. Movie fans will be treated to the great film version of the play, West Side Story, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducting the music of The Nutcracker Suite. The program will be given at 1:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are now on sale at the Gannett Theatre Box Office. Reservations through Friday, Dec. 23. Tickets are limited.

Dick Sale's revenge [illegible] and [illegible] are put through the wringer in a large [illegible] at Dana Andrews and Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. [illegible] of Sunset Strip. Both are [illegible] who meet once [illegible] in the air. As we can [illegible] expect to see two [illegible] for 105 minutes, the [illegible] is [illegible] warning of "[illegible] passengers."

THE FILM explores the [illegible] and personalities of a dozen or so romantically [illegible] individuals aboard the [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] the movie is [illegible] [illegible] Andrews [illegible] [illegible] Zimbalist [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]