

As I See It
Tis the Season
For Kids' TV

By Pat Costa



It was Channel 8 all the way at our house the other night with varying results.

The kids started off with the rerun of "The Little Drummer Boy" narrated by Greer Garson. It was the umpteenth Christmas special for children they've seen this month including the familiar ones about Rudolph, Frosty, the Grinch, an animated cartoon version of "A Christmas Carol" and even one with Fred Astaire playing a postman — well the cartoon character looked and sounded like the dancer.

One can't help feel that some of these specials were put together for the sole purpose of selling merchandise during the breaks. The kids seemed less discriminating and certainly unaware that there was heavy emphasis on the fantasy part of Christmas.

Bing Crosby with his annual Christmas show, came on after

"Drummer Boy" and it was a poor effort neither charming, amusing or even lyrical.

Bing did better when he was with ABC — maybe it's because his kids were smaller or the third network thinks bigger when it comes to settings. Most likely though we can just blame it on the writers who resorted to dropping a thudding snowflake before the man sang his song, "White Christmas."

Alan King proved a whole lot more entertaining in his second part of "Love and Marriage" on Kraft Music Hall. Of course he had some great guests including Broadway star James Coco, Stiller and Meara and very pretty songstress Michele Lee.

A poker game scene flopped but a new baby sketch with Anne Meara came off fairly well and the music was diverting particularly "Why Can't a Woman be More Like a Man?"

Beethoven, Buxtehude Given Fine Treatment

By FRANK CROCIATA

On Sunday afternoon (Dec. 13), violinist Andries Roodenburg and pianist Lois Lines concluded their joint commemoration of Beethoven's 200th anniversary. In three Sunday afternoon concerts over the past two months, sponsored by the Nazareth College Music Department, Dr. Roodenburg and Miss Lines surveyed the 10 violin sonatas. The performances were of excellent professional qual-

ity and the artists were consistently "in sympathy" with each other and Beethoven.

Sunday's program included the most popular and the most demanding of the sonatas. Unfortunately, this third program came off with less ease and facility than did the first two. Dr. Roodenburg opened with the "Spring Sonata", Op. 24. He gave a spirited and exciting performance. Before intermission he performed the last sonata, in G Major, Op. 96, in which technical problems made a unified conception impossible.

Dr. Roodenburg concluded with the charming "Kreutzer Sonata". Again he was plagued with technical problems, but this did not encumber his exuberance, and the results were gratifying.

The violin sonatas of Beethoven are not the easiest for performer or listener, but despite their difficulty they are extremely rewarding. A debt is certainly owed Dr. Roodenburg, who is professionally a medical doctor and Miss Lines. I hope to have the opportunity to hear them both again.

EASTMAN POLYPHONIC CHOIR

On Sunday evening (Dec. 13), the Eastman Polyphonic Choir under M. Alfred Bichsel and organist David Craighead presented "Abendmusik" of Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1703), at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word. "Abendmusik", Evening or Twilight Music, according to Mr. Bichsel's notes, was the practice of presenting concerted music after Vespers during the Advent season, and was begun by Buxtehude in 1637 at the church of St. Mary in Lubeck.

The choir presented three cantatas of the Danish master: "Rejoice, Beloved Christians", "The Infant Jesus", and "Good Christian Men Rejoice", as well as the chorale "How Brightly Shines the Morning Star". Dr. Craighead performed Buxtehude's "Magnificat" and several organ chorales.

The entire program was consistently excellent, both in concerted efforts and in vocal execution. The choir is probably the only local chorus able to approach polyphony on a scholarly level. To this listener they are the finest performing ensemble of the Eastman School. Dr. Craighead was flawless in every way.



Carmel Quinn To Perform At Notre Dame

Notre Dame High School's second Annual Musical Benefit will feature Carmel Quinn, singing star of Radio and TV, Thursday, Jan. 21 at Notre Dame Auditorium. A matinee will be held for school children at 2 p.m., and a performance for adults at 8:30 p.m.

Proceeds from this benefit will be used to make up the difference between tuition income and operating expenses of the school.

Carmel Quinn first became famous on the Arthur Godfrey TV and Radio shows, but has recently appeared coast to coast in personal appearances and in various musical comedy roles.

COURIER 2



Mitsuo Fuchida, as he is portrayed in the new film "Tora, Tora, Tora!"

The Tiger Turns Preacher

New York — (CPF) — The Japanese pilot who led the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor has spent most Sunday mornings since then spreading peace and love — as a lay preacher in the Presbyterian Church.

Mitsuo Fuchida, now 67, commanded 354 planes that Sunday morning and was the first to spot the American vessels in Hawaii and launch the attack that drew the U.S. into World War II.

But when the war was over, Fuchida — who had been seriously wounded in the Battle of Midway — found himself and other Japanese the target of another invasion: this time

from Christian missionaries.

In a New York press conference held in connection with the premiere of the new film about the Pearl Harbor attack, Tora, Tora, Tora (the Japanese code words meaning "Tiger, tiger, tiger," which Fuchida read back that Sunday morning to report that complete surprise had been achieved), Fuchida told how he had picked up a pamphlet about the Bible, and read it and had become increasingly interested in Christianity.

Not only did Fuchida become a convert, but for 10 years he was pastor of a Japanese-language church in Berkeley, Calif.,

where he ministered to 300, most of them Japanese laborers and young war brides of American soldiers returning from occupied Japan.

He termed the film, made by both American and Japanese directors, an accurate portrayal as far as the Japanese side is concerned, and said the actor who plays him (Takahiro Tamura) portrays Fuchida "even better than me."

Fuchida, who now lives in Japan but who was a permanent resident of the United States from 1957 to 1967, is now anti-war but refrains from preaching about it in his sermons.

At Home with the Movies

THE PASSWORD IS COURAGE (1962)

Thursday, Dec. 24 (CBS)

Charles Coward was a British sergeant-major who spent most of World War II being tossed into — and ingeniously escaping from — Nazi prison camps, and this film is based on Coward's biography.

Played for laughs, much in the manner of TV's Hogan's Heroes, the film stars Dirk Bogarde and was made by Virginia and Andrew Stone, who provide a lot of interesting technical effects. If you like prisoner-of-war comedies and derring-do, this will entertain.

The national Catholic film office rated this A-1, unobjectionable for all.

LIFE WITH FATHER (1947)

Friday, Dec. 25 (CBS)

Adapted from the longest-running Broadway production ever, this film stars William Powell and Irene Dunne as the Mom and Dad of Clarence Day, played by Jimmy Lydon.

Set in 1880 New York City, the story is about an eccentric father, a love affair that develops between Clarence and a 17-year-old visitor (Elizabeth Taylor, in her first romantic role), and baptism. It seems Father Day was never baptized and his wife, fearful he cannot enter heaven, tries to rectify things before it's too late.

At the time, while rating it A-2 — unobjectionable for adults and adolescents — the Catholic film office felt obligated to observe that "this film presents certain concepts on the Sacrament of Baptism which are contrary to Catholic teaching and practice."

TWO FOR THE SEESAW (1962)

Saturday, Dec. 26 (NBC)

Robert Mitchell and Shirley MacLaine star in a two-character story about a newly-divorced lawyer from Omaha who goes to New York and meets — and has an affair with — a kookie Bronx-born lover of modern dance named Gittel Mosca.

This is a summary and evaluation of prime-time films offered by the network to its affiliate stations. Check your local listings to ascertain if your channel is scheduling the network offering.

Most critics felt it suffered in comparison with the Broadway play, in which Henry Fonda and Anne Bancroft starred, but if you haven't seen the play you may enjoy the literate script (mostly adapted from William Gibson's play), even though there is very little action.

NCOMP rated it A-3, unobjectionable for adults.

THE CARDINAL (1963)

Sunday, Dec. 27 (ABC)

This is Otto Preminger's treatment of the 25-year rise of "Stephen Fermoye" from Boston seminarian to Cardinal, a rise that takes him swiftly through confrontations with abortion (his sister dies because he cannot approve), race (he fights the Ku Klux Klan and backs a Negro priest), dabbles with romance during a leave of absence (with Romy Schneider) and tries to get an Austrian cardinal to oppose the Nazis before it's too late.

Critics were widely divided on this one — some hailing it as a well-made drama even though it fails to show the spiritual side of the hero's vocation, others blasting it as typical Preminger: all surface and sensationalism.

The Catholic film office rated it A-4 (unobjectionable for adults, with reservations) and commented, in part:

"As a dramatization of the humanity of the Catholic priesthood, presented against a background of richly photographed and handsomely produced liturgical ceremonies, and realized with some sensitive performances, this motion picture makes for absorbing entertainment."

"The theme of the story, however, involving as it does

delicate theological-ethical issues and Catholic practices, is sometimes treated in such a manner that questions which would require a fuller explanation for the immature and uninformed may be subject to possible misunderstandings and misinterpretation. (However) with proper guidance and instruction, adolescents could also find the film of entertainment interest."

A more detailed review of the Cardinal will be found on page 11B.

LILIES OF THE FIELD (1963)

Monday, Dec. 28

Sidney Poitier won his Academy Award as the Baptist handyman who is conned by a group of immigrant nuns (led by Lilia Skala) into helping them build a chapel in the American Southwest.

Based on William Barrett's novel, this film was and is one of the most delightful films ever made: low-keyed acting, a sprightly musical background (featuring the "Amen" spiritual) and a beautiful message.

NCOMP rated it A-1, unobjectionable for all.

MATCHLESS (1967)

Tuesday, Dec. 29

Another spy spoof, this features Patrick O'Neal as a journalist who unwittingly gets involved in an international race for a deadly chemical substance. He is aided, in tight spots, by a magical ring (given to him by an Oriental while they're cellmates in Red China) that enables him to become invisible for short periods of time.

Princess Ira Furstenberg plays (her voice is dubbed) a U.S. intelligence agent who is his love interest. Most critics gave this film a thumbs-down, but some thought the spoof was cute.

NCOMP gave it a B, objectionable in part for all, because of "blatant suggestiveness in costuming and situations."

(Catholic Press Features)