

Nazareth Stage Hosts Ancient Folk Drama

An authentic Italian carnival show, "La Canzone di Zeza" (The Song of Zeza) will be staged, in Italian, 8:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 18.

The musical play is a traditional carnival event still performed by peasants in the small towns of the Campania region of Italy. The play's origins date back to the 17th Century. Although it was performed with some regularity until the middle of the 1950s, the advent of television and the large migration of people from the region brought about a decline in performances.

Early in the last decade, however, the tradition was resurrected. The Nazareth production will be staged by I Giullari di Piazza, a theatrical group formed to revive the traditions of Italian folk music and theater.

Ticket information is available by calling 586-2420.



"Pulcinella," "Zeza," and "Don Nicola" ham it up in La Canzone di Zeza.

Movies in Brief

"The Pirate Movie" (20th Century-Fox) — This incompetent movie revolves around contemporary characters (Kristy McNichol and Christopher Atkins) who find themselves in the world of Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance." Filmed entirely in Australia, veteran director Ken Annakin desperately tries to evoke laughter at any cost, relying mainly on pratfalls, vulgar language, and crude double-entendres, but nothing can save it from its own ineptitudes. Because of the low level of its sexual humor, the U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it A-III (adults). The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG (parental guidance).

"The Road Warrior" (Warner Bros.) — Set in a postnuclear wasteland, this Australian action thriller pits a surviving outpost of civilization clustered around a still functioning oil refinery against the barbarian horde who needs gasoline for its motley assortment of vehicles. The outpost's mission is to get the gas through the hostile lines to a city rumored to be rebuilding in the North,

and Max (Mel Gibson), a wandering loner, is chosen to pull it off. Except for director George Miller's stylish use of the near future setting, there is little in this blood-and-gore epic to occupy the mind. Because of its excessive violence, the U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it O (morally offensive). The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R (restricted).

"Summer Lovers" (Filmways) — Given an Aegean holiday as a graduation present, a callow youth (Peter Gallagher) takes his girlfriend (Daryl Hanna) to a picturesque Greek island where a French archaeologist (Valerie Quennessen) teaches them that threesomes have more fun than couples. Achieving the emotional level of a tourism poster, writer-director Randall Kleiser's film is an experience in boredom that could have appeal only for the most desperate of voyeurs. Because of the theme and excessive nudity, the U.S. Catholic Conference has classified it O (morally offensive). The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R (restricted).

Books in Review

On Being a Friend. By Eugene Kennedy. Continuum (New York, 1982). 155 pp., \$10.95.

By S.J. Miragliotta

The best things about Eugene Kennedy's book "On Being a Friend" are its moments of lucidity. Three of the many consecutive sentences not included in those moments are these: "Death that has no relationship to friendship has no power over us, no relevance to human existence. The mysteries of embracing and letting go, of friendship and death, are ever present. They constitute the one great signal about our transcendence."

Loyal disciples of this widely published author will yell "quoted out of context." To quiet them, I cite some moments of lucidity: "If persons did nothing but watch television all day they would have a strange idea of the universe. If they watched game shows they would conceive of men and women as greedy and entirely foolish people, conditioned to beg for prizes the way lower animals can be conditioned to beg for food."

That's the way it is with Kennedy's uneven essays on friendship tied in with death and love: some clarity and force, some lovely poetic thoughts, and plenty of hack writing and academic jargon which give the reader an uneasy time understanding them. Kennedy's first sentence in his introduction jolts one's ear: "Any understanding of friendship depends on an appreciation of paradox."

Well, G.K. Chesterton is called a master of the paradox. I'm comfortable with his paradoxes because of their lucid armchair charms. Kennedy occasionally and humorously lapses into familiar talk. But for the most part, he is taut, like a violin E string, the one which, inproperly played on, sounds as eerily shrill as a cat's meow when the animal is cornered by another overpowering, unfriendly cat.

There are noble ideas in Kennedy's "reflections" (that's what he calls them) on friendship, noble concepts such as this: "The truest path to friendship lies in the effort to make our best selves available to others, to strip ourselves of

the obscuring dross of selfishness and to give more than we demand."

But, as I have said, that is a moment of lucidity. The book is unreadable, often repetitive, self-contradictory and in need of editorial doctors. The reflections sound as if they originally were lectures given to students at Chicago's Loyola University where Kennedy, a former Maryknoll priest, is professor of psychology.

If this is so, then Kennedy's fault is proportion: too much for students, too little for general readers.

Miragliotta is NC News librarian.

Down to Earth, by Erik P. Eckholm. Norton (New York, 1982) 238 pp., \$14.95.

By Anne Bingham

Twenty years ago the publication of "Silent Spring" launched the current wave of environmental concern. Ten years later, in 1972, the United Nations sponsored an international conference on the environment. This Stockholm Conference, as it is known, was a turning point for the movement because the focus shifted from wildlife and wilderness areas alone to the needs of that most precious natural resource: human beings.

Much of the Stockholm Conference's agenda was provided by the late Barbara Ward, economist and passionate defender of the earth's resources, particularly through her book "Only One Earth," which she wrote with microbiologist Rene Dubos. Ward was commissioned to update this work for the 10th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference this year, but her final illness (she died in 1981) prevented her from doing more than outlining the project.

Co-worker Erik P. Eckholm, who has a number of environmental credits in his own right, carried on the project and "Down to Earth" is the result.

Despite its cutesy title, the book appears to be a solid piece of research. Eckholm compresses an amazing amount of information into 11 tightly organized, well written chapters, which

include sufficient background on each topic to give the general reader an overview of the problem while at the same time sparing the specialist pages of elementary information.

The book's most emphatic point is that environmental problems can't be explained entirely in terms of whales and virgin timber vs. crass commercialism. Rather, a significant portion stems from the desperate poverty of the world's "underclass." It's hard, for example, for a Third World peasant to get worked up about the long-term effects of pesticides when the bugs are marching on the family's meager patch of barley.

The chapter on population may raise some hackles. Some Catholics in the field maintain that the birth rate will drop in overcrowded countries once people are assured of sufficient income to provide a secure living.

Eckholm's thesis is that development alone is not enough, and that the only effective means of stemming population growth is through a combination of birth control, presumably in all forms, and development.

The book reports many, many failures in managing environmental issues in the past 10 years, and a few successes, notably the strides to preserve the ozone layer of the atmosphere. There is no happy ending, just a faint glimmer of hope.

In general, it's a deadpan report about the problems the world's surface faces, some suggestions about solving them, and some believable reasons why more progress hasn't been achieved.

Anne Bingham is managing editor of Allied Industrial Worker, a labor union newspaper, and a frequent contributor to the Catholic press.

The Ordinary Way, by Dolores R. Leckey. Crossroad (New York, 1982). 152 pp., \$7.95.

By Father Mark S. Mealy

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of families

which have as a goal fostering their spiritual life. Dolores Leckey's work makes a significant contribution to that end.

As a special adviser to the United States delegation to the synod on the role of the Christian family, executive director of the U.S. bishops' Committee on the Laity and the mother of four children, Mrs. Leckey has a keen sensitivity to the needs and expectations of family life and enthusiastic and provocative suggestions for families developing a religious experience.

"The Ordinary Way" suggests that the universal call to holiness can be an integral aspect of family life with stresses and responsibilities. The quest of the family for a system to enhance the spiritual life is found in the tradition of monasticism, in particular, St. Benedict's monastic household.

"The original vision of Benedict's monastic way was decidedly domestic, and laymen of all ages, from youngsters to elders, formed the household. There they sought God, not by unusual or esoteric means, but in the ordinary events and rhythms of daily life." This paradigm destroys the walls separating monasticism and family life, and demonstrates a unanimity of spirit and purpose. Monasticism is chosen as the model for family spirituality because of its simple lifestyle nurturing "the ordinary dynamics of personality."

The value of personal experiences is highlighted by its frequent use, and assists the reader in personalizing the attributes of monasticism. In a chapter on hospitality the author describes the opening of her home to Kenny, a 39-year-old inmate who was denied parole because he was without family or friends to help him "make it" on the outside. While describing the numerous experiences with Kenny, Mrs. Leckey forthrightly describes the anxieties, frustrations and support encountered by the family, and how the greatest gift offered to Kenny was friendship, "a sense of reliable presence, a kind of stable hospitality."

Father Mealy, a member of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, is minister of religious education and associate pastor of St. John Neumann Parish, Reston, Va.