

THEATRE AND MUSIC IN JOHANNESBURG

"See Naples and Die"

"See Naples and Die," from the pen of that popular playwright, Elmer Rice, was presented last Sunday night at the Jewish Guild before a full house. Producer Harry Kahn is to be complimented on having achieved such a worthy addition to the long list of successes which now stands to the credit of the Guild's Dramatic Art Association.

The stage set depicting the terrace of a hotel on the Bay of Naples was one of the best in design and colour ever used on the Guild stage and made a brilliant background for the play.

Although it is the paramount duty of a critic to criticise, no amateur production is flawless. One can pass over the weaknesses that were revealed here and there and put them down to lack of experience of some of the cast who are practically recruits. They will improve as they go along. It would, however, have added much to the effectiveness of the parts of Charlie Carrol and Mitzi (played respectively by Theo Chadwick and Sally Hearn) if they could have managed Americanism with a little more success. At times they were positively West End. Otherwise they gave presentable interpretations.

Isadore Shulman as Prince Kosoff was ideally blase and smooth, while Beryl Ritch had an excellent stage presence as Kumie. Cecile Cohen as Annette put in some good work, and Sylvia Hofman as Mrs. Evans gave a splendid cameo which provided many laughs. Andrew Mirwish as Basil Lawinsson gave an agreeable impression of an English artist. Harry Palmet as Von Klaus gave an amusing and carefully studied piece of character work.

The remainder of the cast responsible for the various small parts all contributed their quota to the fine entertainment which this production provided; but special attention must be made to Doreen Lehman who as Mizza, the Maid, was the perfect mimic, flirtatious and attractive hussy. In taking a curtain call at the end of the show, the entire company and producer Kahn were accorded a well merited ovation.

The repeat performance of this delightful comedy on Sunday, February 21, should draw another full house.

W.G.

Waislitz Staging "Life is Calling"

ADMIRERS of the Yiddish Theatre will have another opportunity next week of seeing the eminent Jewish actor, Mr. Jacob Waislitz, perform in Johannesburg at the head of a talented company. He is staging a new Yiddish play "Life is Calling," by Mele Belacherkowsky. The play portrays the drama of Jewish life in modern Russia.

In this production, Mr. Jacob Waislitz will have the assistance of a new arrival to South Africa, Mr. Faivish Eggelbaum, the well-known Continental actor, who was a leading artist in the "Young Theatre" group of Warsaw. Included in the cast are also other talented local Yiddish players as Messrs F. Kopelowitz, Mr. L. Gelvin and Mr. M. Tabatchnik.

The performance will take place at the Jewish Guild on Wednesday, the 23rd February, and Saturday, the 27th February.

Fine S.A.B.C. Symphony Concert

THE 46th concert of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's Symphony Orchestra was held at the Jewish Guild on Tuesday last. The programme chosen was an interesting and varied one, ranging from Dvorak's delightful "Carnival" and Delius' "Brigg Fair" in pastoral mood to the ever popular Fifth Symphony of Beethoven.

Even though Mr. Jerry Schulman may fail to reach heights of artistry, his sense of balance and proportion makes for a well-rounded performance. The audiences at the Guild appreciate the concerted effort of both conductor and orchestra.

Dvorak's lively Overture, "Carnival," the opening number, was handled in a bright mood and the skillful orchestration was most enjoyable. The harmonic qualities of Delius through Mr. Schulman's apt interpretation produced an atmosphere of rare beauty.

The third movement of Beethoven's gigantic "Fifth" was brilliant. The appreciative audience welcomed this masterly work and responded most enthusiastically.

H.F.

Johannesburg Musical Society

THE considerable number of people who braved the inclement weather on Wednesday evening of last week to attend the pianoforte and violin recital at the Library Theatre given by Heinz Hirschland and Peggy Hayman were well awarded by some delightful and exquisitely rendered music. The items comprising the programme were well chosen and the rendering of each was accorded an enthusiastic and richly merited ovation.

Miss Hayman, who only recently returned from Europe after extensive studies there, is a young violinist of fine musicianship and artistry. She has a sense of interpretation surprising in one of her years and at the conclusion of her performance on Wednesday night the appreciation of her listeners was shown in the numerous bouquets presented to her.

Mr. Heinz Hirschland revealed a sureness of touch and technique which stamp him as a player of merit and he received hearty applause from his listeners.

All in all the concert was most satisfactory and the Johannesburg Musical Society may well be congratulated upon it.

W.G.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SOCIETY

The tenth concert of the South African Society for Contemporary Music will be held on Friday, the 26th of February, at 8.45 p.m., at the residence of Mrs. C. G. Sharp, 7 Valley Road, Westcliffe.

The artists for the evening will be Miss Eileen Borwell (soprano); Mr. Leonid Birsan (violinist); Messrs. Robert Lloyd, Jose Rodriguez Lopez and Hyman Sachs (pianists). The programme includes selections by Medtner, Sibelius, Dohnanyi, Bartok and others. Tickets are obtainable at Recordia, 103 Eloff Street, Johannesburg.

A New Art Studio

TO Miss Joan Guinsberg goes the credit of having opened in Johannesburg the first art studio to be devoted almost entirely for the encouragement of South African artists. Two rooms in Hepworth's Buildings have been artistically decorated, and, under the name of "Gainsborough Gallery," will become a new home for local art talent.

Miss Guinsberg, who is an artist herself, has a small, but very fine collection of all types of paintings in one of these rooms, as well as some good examples of sculpture. She has framed the pictures simply, but in excellent taste. The adjoining room is devoted to crafts, in which subject she is planning to arrange lessons.

Miss Guinsberg is deeply interested in Palestinian art and has a varied collection of work from that country. She has some excellent work from South African Jewish artists, among them some work by Rene Shapshak.

Miss Guinsberg's main object is to establish a home for local artists, a place into which they can stroll at any time, where they can get away from the world of everyday and find encouragement, calm and inspiration.

The pictures on exhibition are all for sale; some of them would fit admirably into modern settings, others are for a more old-world atmosphere. Miss Guinsberg is getting some pictures from overseas, as well as some pottery from Palestine. Later on, she will probably arrange one-man exhibitions, which should prove most interesting.

It is to be hoped that this enterprising young lady will meet with success in her praiseworthy venture.

Q.M.B.

Mr. J. H. Amshewitz

MR. J. H. AMSHEWITZ, the well-known South African Jewish artist and painter, has had two of his fine still-life paintings purchased by the Pretoria Art Gallery. The two paintings, one entitled "Rogues in Porcelain," and the other "The Chase," were exhibited at his exhibition at the Carlton Hotel recently.

CHARLES LAUGHTON IN "REMBRANDT"

The colourful life of the great Dutch painter is very well depicted in Charles Laughton's latest picture "Rembrandt"—the present attraction at the Metro Theatre. Laughton plays the part of the painter with a rare understanding, and his acting when he finds that his masterpiece, "Night Watch," has been entirely misunderstood is a brilliant piece of work. Elsa Lanchester, as his servant, Gertrude Lawrence, John Bryning, Abraham Sofaer and Edward Chapman are included in an excellent supporting cast. The rest of the programme, too, proves to be well up to standard.



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