

'THE BOYFRIEND' SHOWING AT MARS HILL

Let's face it, this show is pure corn --a musical spoof of the 1920's, of the *British* 1920's--of the *British* in France in the 1920's. But, it's corn done extremely well. Sandy Wilson, the author, has taken the old, old theme of poor little rich girls, unable to find love because she (or her father) thinks everyone is after her millions. She meets the poor little rich boy who feels the same. She disguises herself as a secretary, he as a delivery boy.

They meet, decide each is after the other's money, and are reunited in the end. Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy gets girl, of not meaning to sound like a chauvinist, girl meets boy, girl loses boy, girl gets boy. In between all this is an evening of pure enjoyment.

The drama department has spared no means in producing this musical. Wayne (the King) Pressley and his band of reknown are ensconced behind the scenes and the do an excellent job. Live music of this sort is always preferable to an evening with the stereo, no matter how expensive the set up.

Jill Prior has done a marvelous job with the choreography. We didn't know some of folks could move that way. Bill Gregg's Charleston is something you can't afford to miss.

Jim Thomas's set is good, and for the first 25 people who write in with the correct definition of periaktoi, we'll award them a well-used Funk and Wagnalls. However, the periaktois are not the only innovation for this show. The stage has been changed from a "thrust" type, to a more traditional proscenium type complete with the grand drape 20 feet high and 36 feet long.

However, this change necessitated chopping off a total of eight feet from the sides, which cramps the space with this show, particularly when everyone is on stage.

Now to the actors. The Walker as Tony and Susan Poovey as Polly Brown are the main characters, and they do very well. However, Walker seems to have a stock performance and his Tony is reminiscent of his role in the *House of Blue Leaves*. Susan Poovey is very smooth. Her movie face carries the extremes of emotion this show demands. If she can't dance as well as Bill Gregg that's all right, her singing more than makes up for it.

Julie Treacy Fortney has coached the singers well and they all sound much better than we expected.

In the parts of Madame Dubonnet, whose finishing school the girls all attend, and Percy Browne, the lead character's father, Chuck Montgomery and Eileen Russell are outstanding. We know that Miss Russell considered transferring at the end of last year, and we are very happy that she decided to return. We still cannot picture her as a sophomore, but then after her performance in *Blue Leaves*, we couldn't believe she was a freshman. As for Montgomery, he displays the smoothness and poise that always gives his appearances believability--even in this show.

The girls of the show, Marsha Holmes as Maisie, Susan Bullard as Nancy, Beverly Jarvis as Millie, Susan King as Dulcie and Kandie Olsen as Fay, provide a marvelous backdrop for the other actors to perform against. The boys; Michael Bailey as Marcel, Bill Gregg as Bobby Van Husen, Tony Haire as Henre, Jim Johnson as Pierre, Ken Wilson as Maurice, and Jimmy Hicks as Alphonse, are just as good.

The cameo appearance by Neil St. Clair and Jill Prior as Pete and Lolita is well executed. Their tango is almost flawless; however, we would likt to see them put a little more expression on their faces. The characters have names like some how blooded Latins but their number is played with a very deadpan face.

It is heartening to see so many freshmen in this show, there is a very large number. Perhaps the show suffers a bit from the inexperience, but any show everyone is not going to be exactly in their place for every dance number.



CHARACTERS LEFT TO RIGHT: Bill Gregg, Marsha Holmes, Ken Wilson, Srah Huff, Susan King and Jim Johnson.

It is well worth the small amount of unexpertise to have these people in the company.

In every show, one is delighted with certain "new finds". And this show is no exception. David Knapp, as Lord Brockhurst, is perfect in the part of Tryone L. Hornee, the classical dirty old man.

His wife, played by Charlotte Tienken is not quite as strong. Their characters are the parents of Tony.

Another find is Sarah Huff. Although not a freshman, Miss Huff is one of the highlights of the show as Hortense. She provides the heavy comedy of the show.

Keith Sargent plays the dual role of the Gendarme and the waiter and does so unobstrusively as do the other two couples, who's names we do not have, who provide the background in the ballroom scene. They do their job of talking and fake drinking champaign (or drink fake champaign) well.

The show was still in a rough form when we saw it. It is a monstrous job of bringing acting, singing, and dancing together. Coupled with the fact that the actors were only able to rehearse with a full orchestra late in reherasal makes for even more confusion.

However, after a few nights with an audience, we predict that it will meet the progressional standard we have come to expect from this department.

There is little dialog in the show, and it is just as well. The music, dances, costumes, and enthusiasm of the cast make it a performance that is well worth seeing. We recommend it.



Final scene. Susan Poovey and Tim Walker as the lead characters of Tony Brockhurst and Polly Browne.



Chuck Montgomery as Percy Browne and Eileen Russell as Madame Dubonnet.