

## Everything but "Arf!"

by Jay Brown

**Annie**, by Meehan, Strouse & Charnin. Directed by Paul Douroumis. Musical Direction by David Kelly. Choreography by Alex Pepe. Set design by Brian Webb. Costumes by Margaret Louise Heatherington. With Katharine Moir, Sonny Sorrels, Karen Boettcher-Tate, Jeff Ditzler, Hollie Weikel and others. Portland Civic Theatre.

*Annie*, based on the perennial comic strip *Little Orphan Annie*, is the perfect kids show. Mostly because it's about an orphan who, by luck and pluck, hitches up with the richest, most powerful man in the world. It's a fairy tale which happens at Christmas, a time when all wishes come true (at least in fairy tales).

*Annie* opens in the New York City Municipal Orphanage (Girls' Annex), home to Annie and ten other orphans and it is during this scene that the play shows life. The orphans perform the only show-stopping number in the long two-acter. "It's the Hard-knock Life" is a marvel of singing and dancing by what is probably the best young talent in Portland. All of these kids are troupers, and one, little pig-tailed Hollie Weikel, is a knock-out. Whenever Hollie is onstage, it's difficult to watch anything else that's going on. W.C. Fields wouldn't have wanted her within a million miles of himself.

The orphans do another short number in the second act, a reprise of "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile," which gives another boost to an otherwise dull night.

Miss Hannigan. Well, what can one say about Miss Hannigan? She's a booze-swilling ogre. She's mean, mean, mean! She hates little girls. And she's lifeless as a stick. Karen Boettcher-Tate, who was marvelous as Muriel

in last year's hit *A Perfect Relationship*, has her work cut out for her. Unfortunately, playing a stereotype ain't easy, but Boettcher-Tate gives her all she's got. Maybe next time *Annie* is done someone will cast a bitchy drag queen as Miss Hannigan.

In a ludicrous mixture of fact and fantasy, Daddy Warbucks (Sonny Sorrels) takes Annie (Katharine Moir) to Washington to visit the president. The play is set in 1933, the worst year of the Great Depression. FDR and his cabinet are trying to find a way to get the country back on its feet, enter Warbucks and Annie. Before the scene ends Annie has FDR and his staff singing "Tomorrow!" Heady stuff.

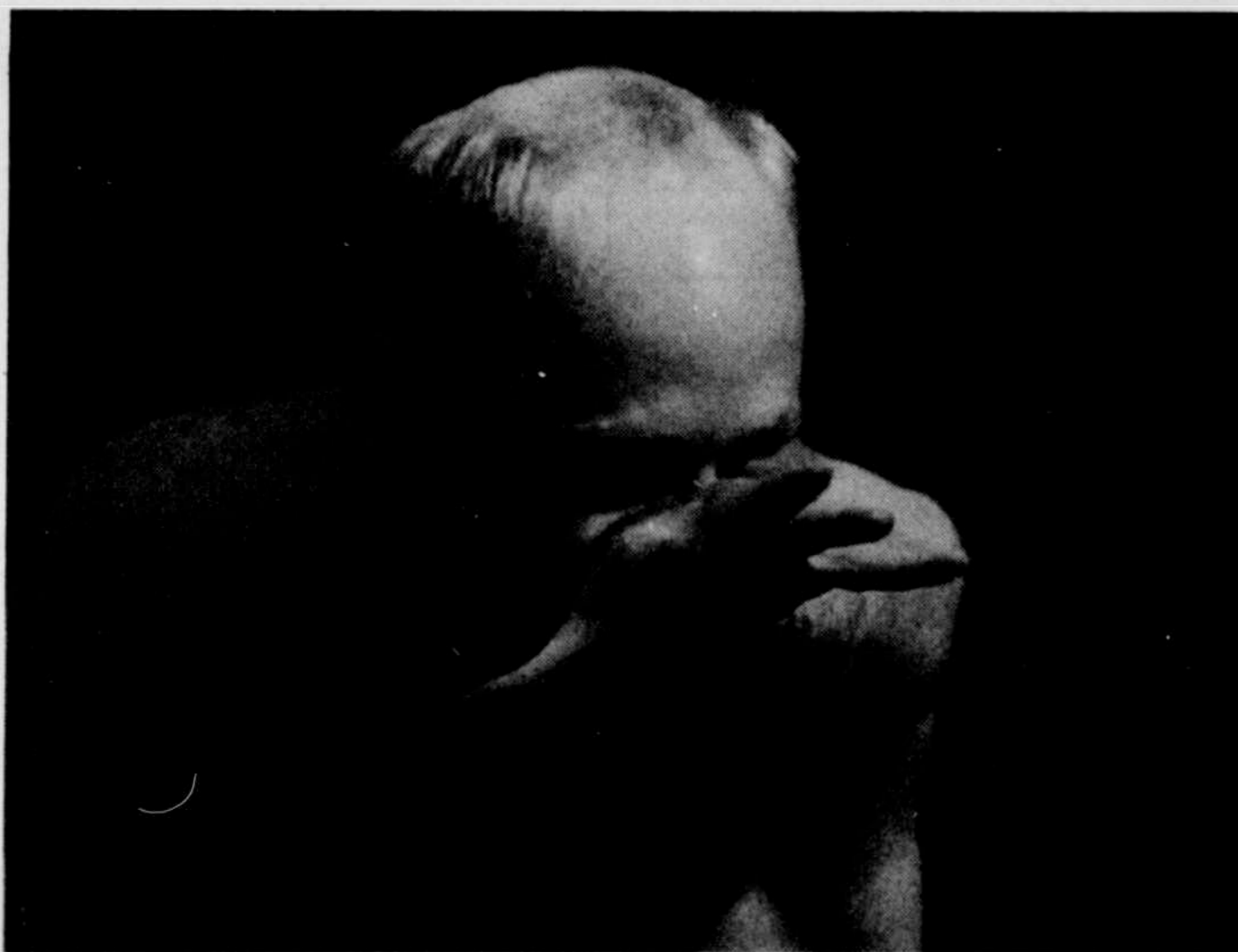
"Where is the ever-present Sandy?" you ask. He comes on for two brief appearances and upstages everyone in sight. Annie finds Sandy in the first act when AWOL from the orphanage. She is returned to the orphanage in a later scene sans Sandy. They are reunited in the last scene without any explanation. And I'd really like to have heard just one "Arf!"

## Dyketones to celebrate 7th birthday

Portland's premiere '50s rock-n-roll dance band, the inimitable *Dyketones*, will kick off their eighth year of political hilarity with a celebration at Starry Night on December 30. Appearing from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., the *Dyketones* will do their thing—combining music, theatre and humor. There will be door prizes and a limbo contest. Childcare will be provided and there is wheelchair access to the dance floor. Tickets (\$5.00) are available in advance at A Woman's Place Bookstore, Meier & Frank and all BASS Outlets. Be there or be square!



Katharine Moir as Annie



Dan Smythe

## Smythe plays hometown

Obsessed with show biz since the tender age of eleven when he was selected to join the Mrs. Nichols prestigious 5th Grade Choir, Dan Smythe will premiere his nationally acclaimed show at PSU's Smith Center Ballroom on December 15, at 8:30 p.m.

An alumnus of Portland Civic Theatre's Junior program, Dan acted throughout his high school years. After high school Dan studied at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, then graduated from Southern Oregon State College with a degree in Theatre.

While in college Dan first created and performed his one-man cabaret which he took to the Big Apple where he performed in

cabarets and nightclubs from 42nd Street to Greenwich Village.

Next stop, Hollywood, where Dan performed at Steinway Hall and the inimitable Rose Tattoo.

Back in Portland again, Dan is working on an MFA at PSU and will, after all these years, perform his show for the first time in his hometown.

The show, Dan says, will encompass all styles of music and songs from every decade of the 20th Century. Other features of the show will be a special guest appearance by Jan Powell, star of last season's *Gypsy* at PCT; musical direction by Ron Snyder, of *Hatbox*, *Icon* and *Hobo's* fame; and choreography by Patti Benson. In addition, there is rumor that there will be a surprise appearance by the lady we all know and love, Mrs. Nichols.