

just entertainment

Ten Percent Revue flaunts it

A musical that has received rave reviews in San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Provincetown — will open at the Northwest Service Center on January 29 for five performances.

Ten Percent Revue is a fast-moving parade of original material written by Tom Wilson Weinberg and performed by Jon Arterton, Jennifer Firestone, Elliot Pilshaw, Helena Snow and Weinberg. Individually, and in various combinations, this quintet presents a panorama of songs and skits.

"The Ballad of Plain Jane" mockingly laments the woes of two spinsters who are obviously having the time of their lives as lesbians.

In the song called "Flaunting It," Tom sings, "My button reads: 'I'm one, too' and if that's flaunting it, I'm flaunting it!"

"If I Were/I'd Like To Be" features a lesbian describing all of the things she'd wear and all the brunches she'd eat "If I were a gay man." A retort is sung by a gay man who says "I'd like to be a lesbian" and be down-to-earth and wear sandals and fix his own car.

"Gay Activist" rings true to many. "I have a button collection, I leaflet bars/I put my arm through my lover's at the Museum of Modern Art."

"We're Everywhere" says, "We're coaching on the fields of Lincoln, Nebraska/We're running pipelines up in Alaska/We are everywhere."

"The Best Years of My Life" details all the social pressures encountered by gay teen-agers.

The singers happily declare that now, today, is the best time of their lives. Now they're having fun, not worrying about facades.

"Wedding Song" is about two gay women who comment: "Our marriage began with a whole lot of lovin', but nobody gave us a toaster oven."

"Not Allowed" targets the problems of being gay. "I can't yell your name out when we race on the beach/I came out and lost my freedom of speech."

"High Risk For Afraids" reflects on the ostracism encountered by those with AIDS: "Those at risk for bigotry are coming out in spades/Now we need a cure for two diseases/High risk for afraids."

In the twenty odd songs that comprise the show, Weinberg dissects both gay/lesbian and straight attitudes. The music is well done and the clever lyrics give the audience an uplifting sense of lesbian/gay solidarity.

Ten Percent Revue is a jubilant affirmation of gay and lesbian love, life and culture and is a refreshing evening of entertainment guaranteed to erase holiday blues and empower people to develop a positive sense of community and self.

Five performances only. A sparkling wine

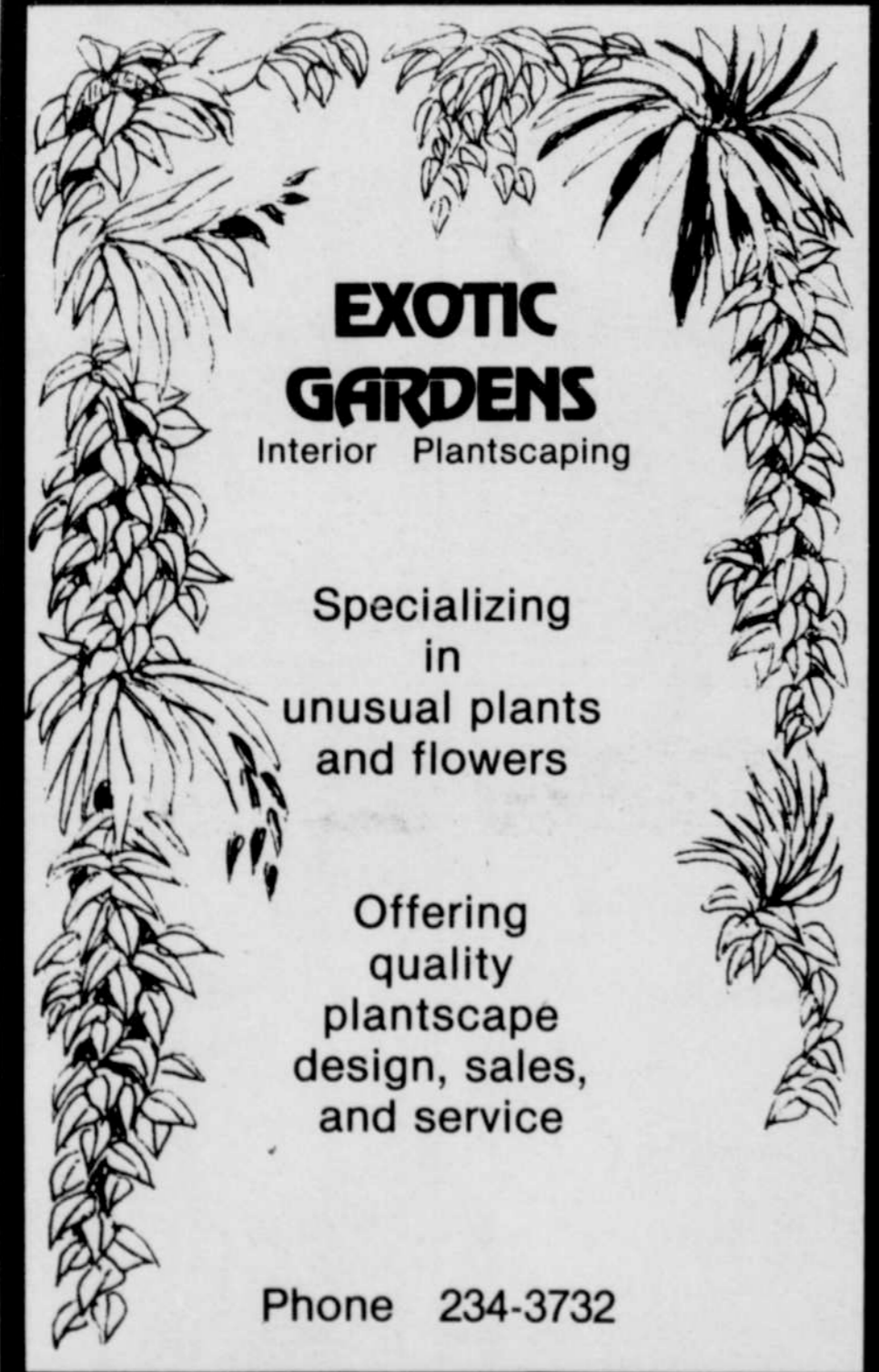


Jon Arterton, Jenifer Firestone, Tom Wilson Weinberg, Helena Snow, and Elliot Pilshaw

and cider opening Thursday, January 29 at 8 p.m., tickets sliding scale \$10-\$15. Saturday, January 31 TWO SHOWS, 7 p.m. and 10 p.m., tickets sliding scale, \$7-12, Sunday, February 1, 7 p.m., tickets sliding scale, \$7-12, and Monday, February 2, 8 p.m. limited income sliding scale, \$5-10. Tickets at A Woman's

Place Bookstore, Phoenix Rising and *Just Out* offices.

Ten Percent Revue is presented by *Just Out* and Phoenix Rising, with proceeds benefitting Phoenix Rising Foundation. Call *Just Out* at 236-1252, or Phoenix Rising at 223-8299 for more information. ●



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Bright "Midsummer" uneven

IFCC policy urges non-traditional casting. Multiracial Shakespeare works to advantage.

BY DOUG E MARTIN

There is much that is fresh in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Director Gary O'Brien has followed IFCC's policy of "blind color" casting, that is to say casting "without reference to race, religion, sex, or sexual preference." (Even though we rarely encounter serious prejudice in the theatre, it is nice to see that last in print.) This has allowed a black Oberon playing opposite a white Titania, a white Theseus playing opposite an oriental Hippolyta, a woman playing Peter Quince, and so on. The multiracial casting is a great step forward for equality in our theatre and in the community at large, but what is perhaps better is that it worked marvelously well and brought some new facets to an old, well-loved play.

The other side of the coin is that since most roles in the theatre, especially in Shakespeare, are automatically considered to be "white roles," non-white actors do not get much experience in playing them. This has resulted in a very inexperienced cast for this production, and very uneven performances. Shakespeare's poetry is not modern American English; it has different words, different rhythms, a different lilt. Some of the actors have caught this well, Michael McBarron as Lysander is very good at making his lines pleasant, entertaining and easy to understand, but most of the others speak in

the clipped, flat tones for which Americans are known. There were some times when the modern readings created some funny anachronistic effects, but more often the effects were dreadful.

Some of the brightest moments in the play were the scenes between Oberon, King of the Fairies (Steve Lee), and Puck (Darrell Geisler). Though they both tended to get lost in the poetry at times (like the rest of the cast), their scenes were alive with mischievousness. Lee's bearing and costume are magnificent, and Geisler has wonderfully wicked grins on his face as he plays tricks on the mortals. They are both having a lot of fun. And the final scene with the bumbling performance of Pyramus and Thisbe for the Duke is hilarious, I think this may be the best rendition of it I've ever seen.

All in all, however, the production lacks cohesion and style. It is purported to be set in ancient Ireland, but there was little evidence of this except the music and dancing (which was on the whole slow and uninteresting). The costumes were sort of generic Shakespearean, the set was basic enchanted wood, and there are constant references to being in Athens. The acting styles were all over the place, and though I liked the device of the actors crashing in and out of the emergency doors, it made little sense in a setting that is supposed to be outdoors. There are many interesting things in this show, but it really needed tighter direction to be good theatre. ●