



SATURDAY NIGHT

JAZZ

8-11 p.m. NO COVER CHARGE

MARCH 29
group therapy

APRIL 5
mike denny

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THEATER BY SHARLEEN NELSON

Mildred's Mania

VLT actors enliven a hapless script.

The Very Little Theater has opened *The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wild*, the third production in its Hollywood Connection series of plays centered on Hollywood themes. This three-act comedy by Paul Zindel spotlights Mildred Wild, a frumpy, aging housewife consumed by movies and the glamorous stars who appear in them. Most people can identify with Mildred to some extent. When life gets too overwhelming, we often turn conveniently to movies as a means of escape. For the price of admission, we are transported to a world where anything is possible. The difference for most of us is that when the show is over, we again return to the real world. Not so for Mildred, however, who devotes her days to entering movie trivia contests on television, perusing her abundant 40-year collection of movie magazines, and attending back-to-back double features.

The action takes place in the tiny, attached apartment behind the dilapidated Greenwich Village candy store that Mildred and her husband, Roy, have operated for 23 years. The world is about to intrude on her tomorrow, however, when the wrecking crew will arrive to tear the place down. Meanwhile, her husband is on the verge of having an affair with the landlady, and her meddling sister-in-law Helen, who thinks Mildred's "on the way to the loony bin via Sunset Boulevard," is pressuring her to snap out of it and get packing. But the lines between reality and fantasy begin to blur for Mildred as she meets each new crisis by segueing into elaborate movie-inspired fantasies such as *Gone With the Wind*, *King Kong*, *The Invisible Man*, and a Shirley Temple revue, each mirroring the drama she's currently experiencing in her own life.

In general, the performances at VLT have been consistently good this season, however, *Mildred Wild* is the exception. The problem is not so much the players, but the play itself. For instance, Zindel seems to follow an assumption about comedy that if you throw in some ambiguous character — in this case, a nun — whether she has anything at all to do with the plot, it's guaranteed to be uproariously funny. The script, too, often bogs down with too much extraneous dialogue, which keeps the play from moving forward and causes the actors to seem like they're rushing through their lines.

In spite of it, the actors do their best to enliven this hapless script. Christine Cody does a great job as Mildred, especially in the fantasy

scenes where she gets a chance to showcase her talent. However, her obsession and the question of her sanity might have been more pronounced, if, rather than the frumpy housecoat and blond wig, her wardrobe was more reflective of the flashy movie stars she venerates. Likewise, Lawrence Larson does an admirable job as Mildred's sincere but befuddled husband, Roy. His best scenes though are in the fantasy segments and opposite Bertha, the landlady.

Eileen Peterson is fabulous as Bertha Gale, the therapy-addicted landlady with the hots for Roy. Always on the verge of a primal scream, Peterson offers probably the most memorable moment in the play in a humorous scene where her beeper goes off when she's hiding behind Mildred's dressing screen. Wearing only a pink negligee, her stoic, caught-almost-in-the-act exit is priceless.

Martha Greaney is convincingly annoying as Roy's intrusive sister Helen. She also puts in a good singing performance in the final fantasy scene.

The fantasy segments are clever devices that move the action into the realm of anything can happen. In *Mildred*, they prop the play up. It also gives actors such as Phillip Hudspeth, who has a relatively small role as Mildred's friend Carroll, an opportunity to shine. And shine he does. Appearing in both male and female roles — he's Scarlett's Mammy, a showgirl, a Tarzan-like hero, and a movie director — Hudspeth takes full advantage of his moment in the spotlight. Laurie de Gonzalez is Sister Cecilia, the hyperactive nun, and Debra Marquess and Anthony "Tony" O'Keefe round out the cast as Miss Manley and Rex Bulby, respectively.

Overall, there were a few flaws. The staging was uneven in the scene in which the Hollywood Housewives prize crew is interviewing Roy and Mildred on camera; the fantasy finale was rather confusing — the marquee lights didn't come up as they did on similar occasions when a fantasy segment was indicated, rendering it unclear whether or not it was devised to trick the audience into thinking that what was happening was real; and there were quite a few flubbed lines and missed cues.

Still, the set was detailed, and the flickering marquee lights surrounding the stage whenever Mildred slipped into a fantasy was a nice touch. The costumes were first-rate, and with a little polish, the play could be, too. **EW**

Yoga Class Schedule beginning Tuesday, April 1, 2003

All classes are drop-in, except the series classes noted with **Series** that require pre-registration
♥ Those with cancer or long-term chronic pain may qualify for free or reduced classes. Please inquire.

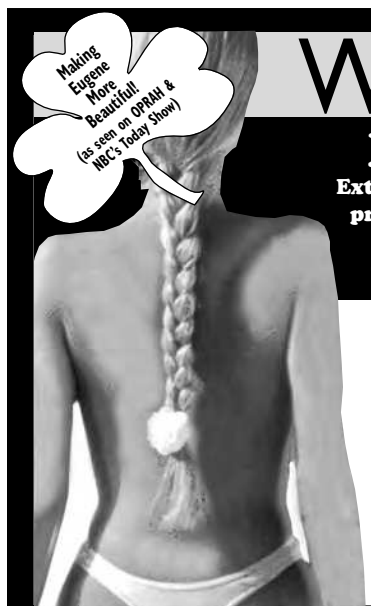
Morning - Early afternoon	Mid-afternoon - Evening
Monday	
10:00 Beginnng Level Yoga Donna	5:30 All Levels Yoga Verna
12:00 Noon Meditation (free) Donna	7:30 Beginning Yoga Series Verna (April 7 - June 2 * Preregistration required)
Tuesday	
9:00 Posture flow-Intermediate (105 minutes) Glen	5:30 Prenatal Yoga ○ Nancy
	♥ 6:00 Gentle Beginning (100 minutes) Donna
	7:30 Posture flow-Intermediate ○ Lisa
Wednesday	
6:00 Early Bird Yoga Lynne	3:30 Continuing/Intermediate Mika
♥ 10:00 Gentle Yoga for Women ○ Donna	5:30 Ashtanga - Level II Matt
12:00 Noon Meditation (free) Donna	7:30 Beginning Yoga Series Michele (April 2 - May 21 * Preregistration required)
♥ 1:45 Extra Gentle Yoga ○ Donna	
Thursday	
9:00 Posture flow New Nancy	♥ 5:30 Gentle Yoga ○ Lynne
- Continuing/Intermediate	5:30 Beginning Yoga Series Michele (Mar. 13 - May 1 * Preregistration required)
11:00 Mama & Baby Yoga ○ Nancy	7:30 Continuing level Yoga Michele
(60 minutes)	7:30 Yoga Nidra Series Lisa (April 3 - 24 * Preregistration required)
Friday	
10:00 Beginning/Cont. Yoga Donna	3:30 Ashtanga Prep Sylvie
12:00 Noon Meditation (free) Donna	5:30 Continuing Level Yoga Steph
Saturday	
8:00 Ashtanga - Level I Tom	
10:00 All Levels Yoga Steph	5:30 Ashtanga - Level I Tom

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