Theatre:
The Godspell of St. Matthew

By P.E. Schindler

Godspell is a positively unique theatrical experience which should not be missed.

There, it had to be said simply; now there is time to amplify why Godspell is probably the freshest, most enjoyable musical to hit Boston in quite a while.

The story of this play is the story of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and it was begun as a 'dime store' thesis at Carnegie-Mellon (in Pittsburgh) by John Wilbur Tebelak. He took the gospel story and weaved it together into a fascinating play with a piece which he titled the 'Cafe' LaMama in Greenich Village.

What is seen on the pictures, two time Broadway producers (under the direction of one Mr. Mazzini) hearken back to his concept of a full-fledged off-Broadway production. Edgar Antony and Stuart Duncan, brought in Stephen Schwartz to write new lyrics for the play but did not tamper with much of Tebelak's cast, which was made up largely of his classmates from Carnegie.

The critics have been as nearly unanimous as it is possible for them to be in their praise of this musical, and with good cause. It was an amiable production to start with, and it has managed to maintain many of its amiable good points, while developing the gloss of a professional show.

It cannot be easily categorized, but it does make use of the whole theatre as a stage, and there are several scenes during which the cast attempts to get the audience involved. This is done by talking to the audience walking and talking and singing in the aisles, and generally acknowledging the existence of a group of interested observers.

The play itself is a series of vignettes taken from Matthew's story of the life of Christ. All of them are familiar, indeed, sometimes too familiar, but they have certainly not been told as well in recent times as they are told here.

Several styles are used to tell the stories including the Story Theatre style of having actors play both as narrators and characters in the story. Another method used by the young, enthusiastic cast in the telling of the story of the good samaritan, is similar to hand puppet, without the puppets. It must be seen to be believed, but it is entertaining, and it works, and that is all that one must ask of theatre.

There are occasions when it seems as though Godspell does not work. At the very start of the play, it is a little hard to accept Jesus and the disciples dressed as clowns. But, as the play progresses, the audience comes to accept this as the convention within which the story is told. The story, on occasion, is hard to take however: the transitions might work well as jump cuts in a film, but on the stage, they are ragged and abrupt, and occasionally the audience gasps when, instead of slipping from story to story, they are dragged, heels first.

The set is visually intriguing: it is a chain link fence, filling center stage. There are no curtains or backdrops behind it, so one can see the back wall of the Wilbur Theatre behind it (as is Thornton Wilder and Our Town). It is from above with a ladder that fits the mood of the scene being presented. Because of the semi-transparent nature of the chain link fence, stage hands can be seen at work behind it, adding a note of the unusual to the presentation.

The performances are all outstanding, but even among the great, there are those who are greater, and two of the men in this play deserve special credit. Ryan Hilliard, who plays Jesus, is put through the largest range of emotions, and handles the central role with the aplomb of a seasoned professional, which he is. Jerry Sroka, as a man of many voices, could give Mel Blanc a run for his money. Time and again, he proves his versatility during the play. The two of them are a pleasure to watch, and the entire cast is unusual in its uniform quality.

The sound system on occasion leaves something to be desired, but it will hopefully be shaped up by the time the preview is over, and the 'real' performances begin. That happy day will be tomorrow.

Film:

Joe Hill: DOA

By Alan Rasak

The astonishing thing about this picture is that it is a true story. Joe Hill was a Swedish immigrant at the end of the 19th century. It explains it; probably P--Kl3 was followed by B--N2 in more reasonable.

The story of Joe Hill, anyway, is a biopic, in that it is a true story of a Swedish immigrant who became involved in the short-lived Industrial Workers of the World movement around 1910, after traveling around America in vari- ous guises, to include that of a musician, a street urchin, an anarchist, a sea captain, and again, he proves his versatility during the play. The two of them are a pleasure to watch, and the entire cast is unusual in its uniform quality.

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Chess

USCF 1964 Albin Counter Gambit

Tenn. Notch

1. P-Q4 P-Q4
2. P-QB4 P-K3
3. P-KB4 P-QN3
4. N-QB3 N-QB3
5. B-N5 Q-N3
6. 0-0 R-K1
7. B-N5 Q-K3
8. N-QB3 N-B3
9. P-KN3 B-QN5
10. P-KN3 B-Q2
11. N-B3 Q-B4
12. N-K5 Q-N3
13. Q-B4 Q-K3
14. Q-R4 P-QN3
15. Q-R4 P-QN3
16. N-N5 P-B3
17. N/Q-K4 Q-QN2
18. P-B4 Q-QN2
19. P-B4 Q-QN2
20. N-B3 B-QB3
21. N-B3 B-QB3
22. N-B3 B-QB3
23. N-B3 B-QB3
24. N-B3 B-QB3


White's B-7 N5 puts the bishop on an uncomfortable square. Probably P-KN3 followed by B-N2 is more reasonable. 17. N-Q2 is a weak move or P-KN4 followed by B-N2 and BxN.

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