

## Lime jello will get you everywhere

## ARTS

**The Robber Bridegroom**, book and lyrics by Alfred Uhry, music by Robert Waldman. Presented by the MIT Musical Theatre Guild, Kresge Little Theatre, September 4.

What would you say if you were sitting calmly in the fifth row watching a theatre production when suddenly, in the middle of a song, one of the performers comes down and asks if she can sit in your lap? What do you do when she starts running her hands through your beard and complimenting you on its appearance? What if she tells you that, once the performance is over, nay, right now, you should run out and get two cans of Hershey's syrup, some whipped cream, and 47 boxes of lime Jello and meet her in her dressing room, you know, the one with the big gold star on the door? What if she suddenly notices the rest of the audience and says, "There are all kinds of people around here. Maybe we shouldn't do this now. But don't forget." and then turns to the musicians and says, "Hit it," and picks up right where she left off?

I was hard-pressed to find anything to say, but I loved it. And not just because I'm into lime Jello.

From start to finish the entire production of *The Robber Bridegroom* was entertaining, interesting, innovative, and incurably insane. The convoluted themes of mistaken identity and the quest for wealth are well worn devices, but in *Bridegroom* they are presented with such vigor and enthusiasm it is difficult not to become wrapped up in the telling of the story. We follow the path of Jamie Lockhart — a.k.a. the Bandit of the Woods (played by Steve O'Donnell) — as it crosses many times and in many ways with that of the Musgrove family, while the rest of the cast provides witty asides and banter with the audience. If you don't enjoy audience par-

ticipation then this probably isn't the show for you, but this byplay is a large part of *The Robber Bridegroom's* appeal.

The Kresge Little Theatre is the perfect performance space for this type of production because it allows intimate interaction. The audience and the performers are in the same room with a clear view of the

props, costumes and other stage trappings, which furthers the idea that this is just a bunch of plain folks sittin' around tellin' tall tales.

The musicians are right up on stage where you can see them — they even get to participate in some of the action. They are not so obtrusive, however, that their

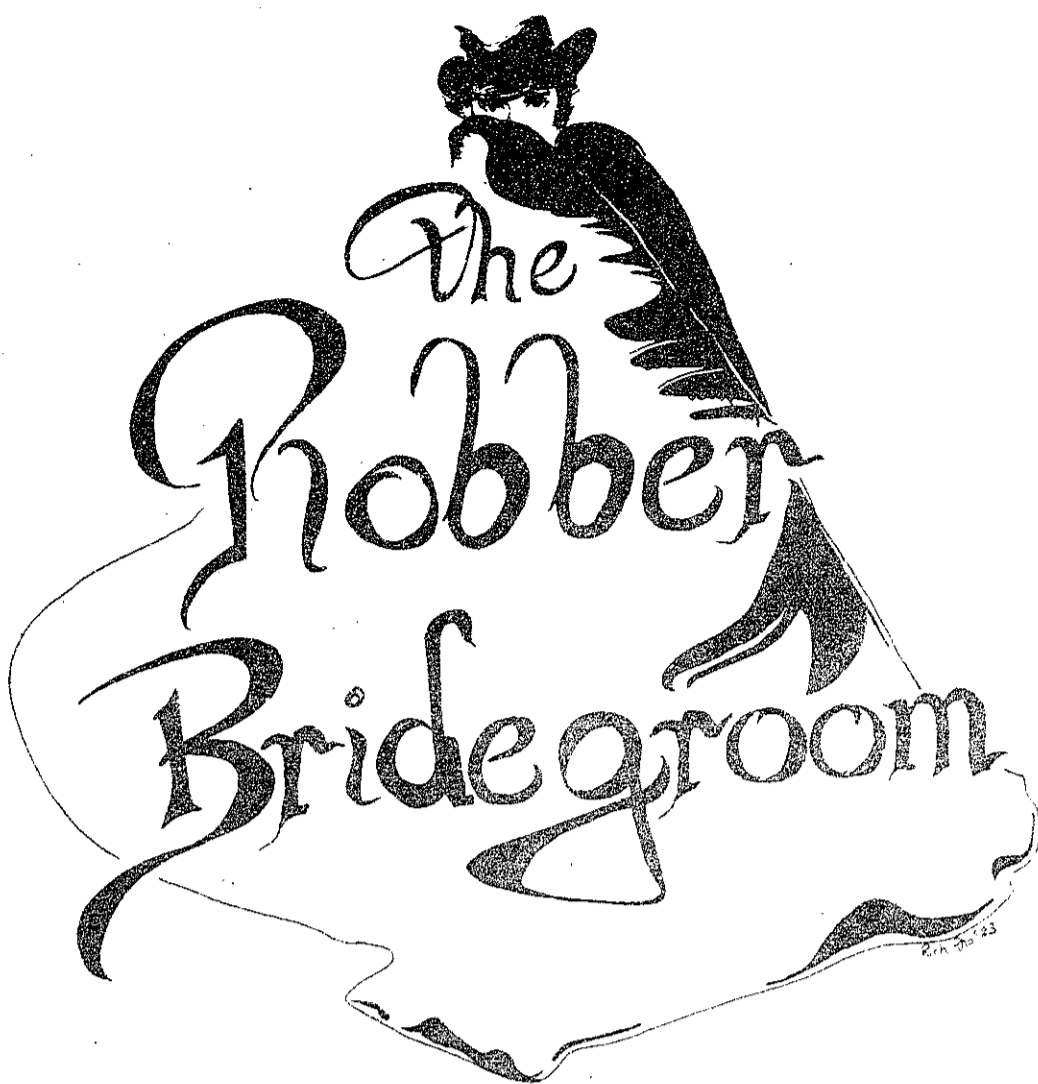
music clashes with the setting — I can't imagine chugging down the Mighty Mississippi on a riverboat bound for New Orleans to the accompaniment of cello and harpsichord. Piano, fiddle, and banjo are far more appropriate, and that's what *The Robber Bridegroom* gives you.

The cast does an amazing job of working together, considering the diverse character representations. Frank Ridley is Clement Musgrove, the kindly (and rich) plantation owner, who loves his daughter Rosamund (Lauren Hoffman Cochran). Rosamund finds her life uneventful and wants desperately to fall in love with a tall, dark stranger. Bonnie Derman '84 portrays Rosamund's shrewish step-mother who has desires of her own, most notably money and handsome young men.

Don Baillargeon and Joseph Bowen are Big and Little Harp, respectively. The most interesting thing about this bumbling pair of highway robbers is that Big Harp is a disembodied head — it seems that anything at all can happen in these tales. Gamalia Pharms is the wise, old plantation mistress with an inexhaustible collection of stories and legends. Phoebe Green, Gregory R. Brown, and Julie M. Tiao '83 are the members of the "Goat" family, poor farmers who can't seem to muster 25 brain cells between them and, therefore, are drawn unwittingly into the schemes of others. And in perhaps the most creative, if less talkative, role Irina Rakin plays The Raven, dressed all in black silk and brocade.

Whether or not you've ever traveled the Natchez Trace and heard those long, tall tales of the Bandit of the Woods you'll be singing, clapping, and laughing with delight at *The Robber Bridegroom*.

Bill Giuffre



## Ars Gratia Artis

If you have never seen the portraits of George and Martha Washington, if you are unable to differentiate between a Monet and a Manet, or if you cannot translate the headline of this article, then a trip to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) will remedy at least two of these three deficiencies. A joint program with the MFA and the Council for the Arts at MIT makes it possible for all MIT students to enjoy the MFA Membership Program for free — all you need do is show your student identification.

Benefits of membership include the free admission, discounts on special events such as lectures, concerts and special exhibitions, and discounts in the MFA Museum Shop — you need no longer rely on the Coop for your art prints. In order to acquaint student members with the museum and its programs, the MFA will be hosting an open house on Wednesday, October 5, from 7-9 pm; introductory tours and music will be provided.

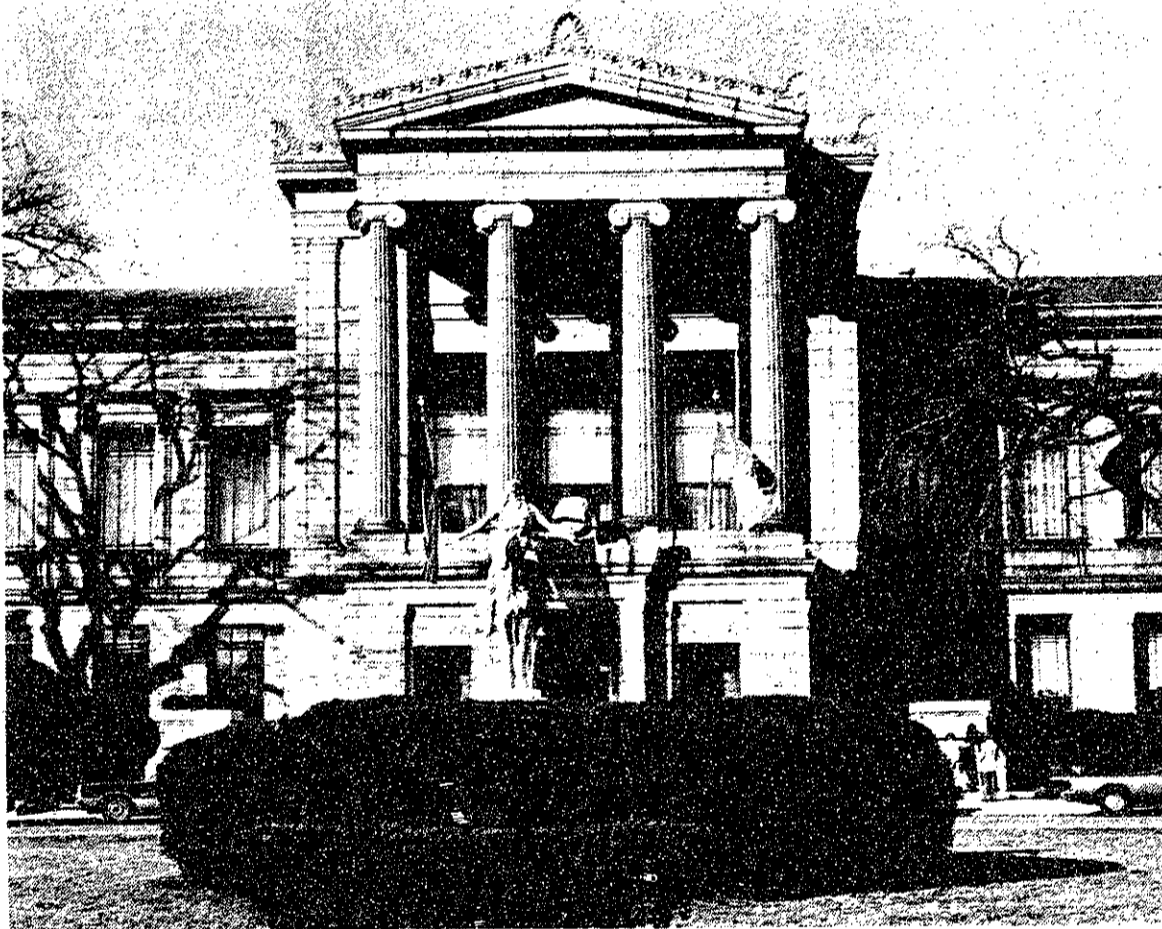
Freshmen wishing to impress their par-

ents may wish to make use of a special program made available this year by the museum. On Freshmen Parents Weekend, September 10 and 11, all MIT freshmen may take, as their guests, two adults to the MFA for free upon presentation of a temporary identification. Take advantage of the program — show your folks you won't be spending all your free time in a library.

Lest you forget, the Museum of Science will be continuing its own free admission program. The museum is well worth investigating — it still holds a few surprises for even the most jaded engineering student.

*The Museum of Fine Arts is located on Huntington Avenue in Boston, on the Green Line near Northeastern University. For recorded information on hours and exhibitions, call 267-9377; for other information call 267-9300.*

*The Boston Museum of Science is located in Boston, on the Green Line Science Park stop, but it's easier to walk there — it's at the end of Memorial Drive, heading east. For information call 742-6088.*



## On the town

Superstar drummer **Bill Bruford** and ace keyboardist **Patrick Moraz** will perform *An Evening of Music by Piano and Drums* at the Paradise on Thursday, September 8 at 8:30 pm. For ticket information call 254-2052.

The MIT Musical Theatre Guild presents *The Robber Bridegroom*, with performances on Fri. & Sat., Sept. 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 at 8:00 pm, and Sun., Sept. 10 at 3:30 pm, in the Kresge Little Theatre. Tickets are \$5/\$3 with MIT ID. For reservations call 253-6294.

Off the Wall Cinema presents *The Revenge of Squaresville, U.S.A.*, starring James Dean, Alfred Hitchcock, Superman, Crusader Rabbit and John Farbotnik! Showing nightly at 7:55 and 10 pm, plus Sat.-Sun. matinees at 2:30 and 4:35. For information call 354-5678.

**New Riders of the Purple Sage** at Jonathan Swift's on Wednesday, September 7 at 9 & 11 pm. For information call 661-9887.

Don't forget to take a chance to have a legitimate work of art for your very own room! Enter the **Student Art Lottery** at the Hayden Gallery on Tuesday, September 6!

The Harvard Square Cinema also continues its **International Director's Festival** with a pair of double features: Francois Truffaut's *The Last Metro* and *The Woman Next Door* on Tue., Sept. 6; and Federico Fellini's *8½* and Louis Bunel's *L'Age D'Or* on Wed.-Thu., Sept. 7-8. For information call 864-4580.

The Harvard Square Cinema continues its **The Genius of Woody Allen** series with a pair of double features: *Love and Death* and *Sleeper*, showing Tue.-Wed., Sept. 6 & 7; and *Interiors* and *The Front*, showing Thu., Sept. 8. For times and ticket prices call 864-4580.