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MASQUERS DO CONTRASTING PRODUCTIONS THIS WEEK

University of Montana Masquer Summer Theater, enjoying a phenomenally successful season, does an abrupt about-face this week, switching from gay comic opera to intense drama.

The final performance of "The Bartered Bride" will be given in the University Theater at 8:30 p.m. Sunday (July 17), and "The Rose Tattoo" will run in the Masquer Theater at 8:30 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, July 21-24, and July 28-31, according to Richard H. James Jr., director of summer theater and designer of the four shows in the series.

A professional production staff, talented performers and an intriguing diversity of offerings are the ingredients of the Masquer success formula. Judging by attendance figures so far and by advance ticket sales for coming attractions, the Masquers have hit upon a winning combination.

In the Masquer-Opera Workshop production of "The Bartered Bride," a charming musical comedy by Smetana, New York soprano Marilyn Zschau sings the title role. Miss Zschau, who toured last season with the Metropolitan Opera National Company, is supported by a cast of 50, including top talent of the Opera Workshop.

The production is directed by S. Joseph Nassif, visiting professor of drama and associate director of summer theater. Opera Workshop director John Lester leads the soloists and the 35-voice chorus through their paces, and Dr. David Whitwell conducts the full symphony orchestra. Esther England, New Plymouth, Idaho, assists Prof. Lester with the chorus and also plays a principal part. (more)
In a sharp departure from the light entertainment of "The Bartered Bride" the Masquers' third show, Tennessee Williams' "The Rose Tattoo," offers heady theatrical fare. The powerful play, which has been called "an exalting poetic cry for man's need of love," is directed by Tom Gruenewald, serving his fourth consecutive summer as a distinguished professor of drama at the University.

Gruenewald has earned numerous acting and directing credits in New York. Recently he completed a residency as artistic director of White Oaks Theater, Carmel Valley, Calif., and a directing assignment at the San Francisco Actors' Workshop. He is a member of Actors' Equity and of the Directors' Wing of the American National Theatre and Academy. He holds degrees from the University of Wisconsin and Columbia.

The versatile Miss Zschau, who shines as a singer in "The Bartered Bride," plays a straight dramatic part in "The Rose Tattoo." Gloria Sykes, Chicago, Ill., is cast as Rosa; Georgia Tree, Billings, as Serafina; Michelle Nassif, Washington, D. C., as Estelle; Billie Marhenke, Powell, Wyo., as Giuseppina; Fred Norman, Phoenix, Ariz., as Alvaro, and Roger DeBourg, Red Lodge, as Father DeLeo.

Missoulians in the cast are Dodie Norling, Karol Kramer, Anabel Osborne, Jeanne Belangie, Laura Weatherly, Carol Knox, Duncan Crump, Todd Oleson, Samuel Joseph and Paul Weatherly.

Judy Parker is assistant to the director, and Al Terhune, Signe Anderson and Harry Trickey are assistants to the designer.

Tickets for the last showing of "The Bartered Bride" Sunday (July 17) at 8:30 p.m. in the University Theater will be available at the box office from noon to curtain time. Tickets for the run of "The Rose Tattoo" in the Masquer Theater will be sold at the box office from noon to 5 p.m. daily and from noon to 8:30 p.m. on dates of performances.