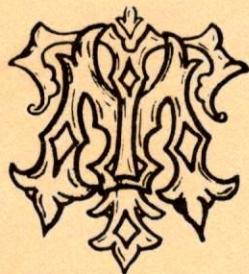


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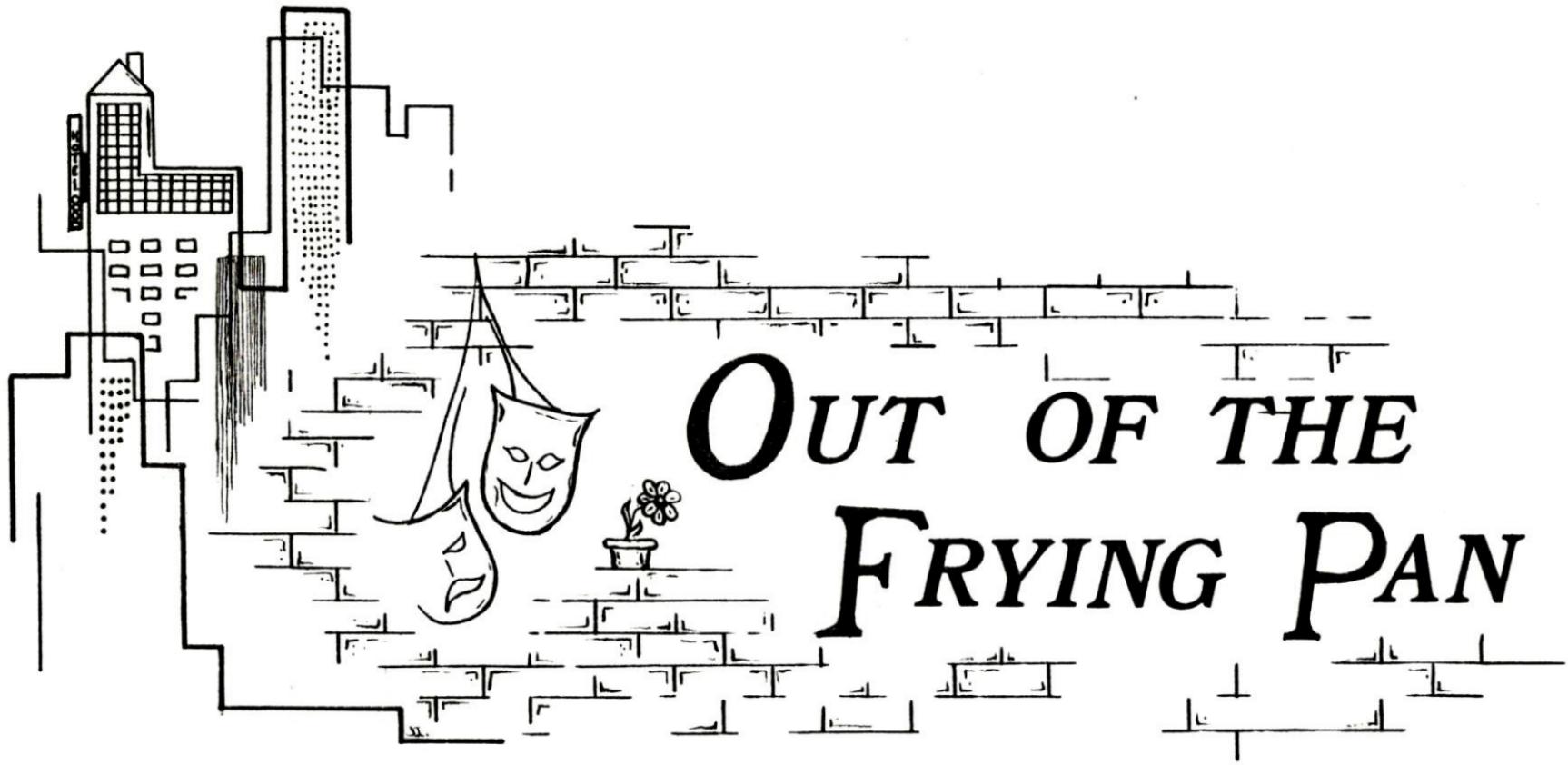
Address: 17601 Saticoy St., Northridge, CA 91324

RESERVED SEATING

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PERFORMANCES

**Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays at 8:30 PM Sharp
Sundays — Early Bird Curtain at 5:00 PM Sharp
Box Office opens one-half hour before curtain
No Seating after 8:30 until first performance break**



***OUT OF THE
FRYING PAN***



VARIETY

1. 2

52 Pages

Hollywood, California-90028, Friday, March 7, 1980

Newspaper Second C



17601 SATICOY STREET
NORTHRIDGE, CALIFORNIA 91324

Directed by: SYDNEY MAY MORRISON

"Dated it may be, but a period piece like this shows us where we've been and, by contrast, where we may be heading."

"Director Sydney May Morrison has handled her enthusiastic and energetic cast with fine attention to period detail and tempo."

Polly Warfield, Drama-Logue

THE MEGAW THEATRE CAST
INVITES PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS, CASTING DIRECTORS & AGENTS
TO AN INDUSTRY INVITATIONAL PERFORMANCE
of
FRANCIS SWANN'S

"OUT OF THE FRYING PAN"

MONDAY, MARCH 10th AT 8:30 P.M.
R.S.V.P.: 881-8166 AFTER 2:30 P.M.

Produced by: THE MEGAW THEATRE, INC.

"The Megaw Theatre's production is fast-paced and funny due to the antics of its lively cast."

"It has the wacky charm of a 40's comedy or an 'I Love Lucy' episode."

Gina Shaffer, Valley Trader



SEATED L TO R: TONY SIMOTES, PATRICE MCGUIRK, JOANNA MARSHALL,
COLLEEN MINAHAN, ELIZABETH DETTERICH, DAVID ROSS BETNER.

STANDING L TO R: KEN FREEHILL, DWIGHT LARICK, JIM HUDSON, JACKY FREY,
LEE ZARA, HUGH MAGUIRE.

News of Northridge

'Out of the Frying Pan' tells actors' struggle

VALLEY NEWS

Thursday, February 21, 1980

By JERRI SPOEHL

"Out of the Frying Pan," Francis Swann's 1947 comedy based on the attempts of young actors struggling to make the "big time" in New York, will continue through April 6 at the Megaw Theater, 17601 Saticoy St., Sydney May Morrison directs, with set design by James Riddle, costumes by Lynn Ziats, with set and lighting by Elizabeth Zia, Garland W. Riddle and Ross Beumer, Jim Hudson, Deuterich, cast W. Riddle, Jack Frey, Jim McGuire, Dwight Ken Freehill, Charles Gherard, Tony Simotes, Lee Zara, Colleen Minahan, Hugh Maguire, Joanna Larick, Patty and Saturdays are 8:30 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays and 5 p.m. Sundays. Ticket information is available at 881-8166.

The Hollywood

Theatre Reviews

SAN FRANCISCO, SACRAMENTO, SAN DIEGO, LAS VEGAS,
CHICAGO, MIAMI, ATLANTIC CITY, NEW YORK

DRAWN TO LIFE

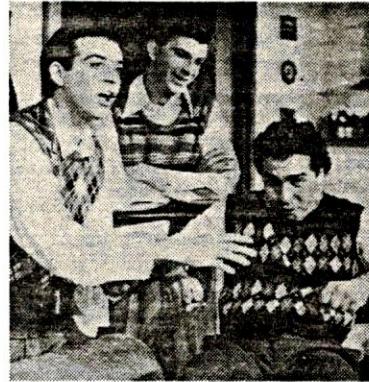
FEBRUARY 21-27, 1980

Out of the Frying Pan

The Megaw Theatre, 17601 Saticoy St., Northridge; 881-8166. Performances Thursday-Saturday, 8:30; Sunday, 5:30; February 15-April 6.

Dated it may be, but a period piece like this shows us where we've been and, by contrast, where we may be heading. When the light-hearted stage-struck youngsters in *Out of the Frying Pan* threaten each other with knives and knock each other out with Mickey Finns, we know it's all in fun. But just below the level of consciousness there's a dark reality — the Manson gang, Guyana, assorted terrorism — that works against the carefree response the play invites.

How times have changed. Yet, there are interesting harbingers here. A mixed sextette of hopeful young thespians inhabit a cluttered brownstone apartment in pre-WWII midtown Manhattan. So 40 years ago, playwright Francis Swann foretold the commune. These kids are all pretty pure and naive by today's standards, and all suffer from a dread disease: actoritis. Their goal is Broadway. A famous producer lives downstairs and between romping rehearsals and a few stolen kisses they spy on him through a hole in the floor. (That tiny peephole beneath the radiator provides them with more information than it possibly could, but this play has little to do with reality.)



**KEN FREEHILL, DAVID ROSS BETNER
& TONY SIMOTES**

Director Sydney May Morrison has handled her enthusiastic and energetic cast with fine attention to period detail and an adagio tempo. Actors bounce around like water droplets on a hot griddle, which is the only apparent reason for calling the play *Out of the Frying Pan*.

part, reason for calling the play *Out of the Flying Trap*.
Ken Freehill is attractive as Norman, who takes every opportunity to assume an accent or a theatrical costume. Playwright Swann wrote the part for himself only to be told he wasn't the type, so Alfred Drake played it on Broadway for about 144 performances. Freehill is versatile, moves well, and has a certain subtlety. When Dottie chases him until he catches her, he announces with surprise: "I love Dottie, see? And I'm going to — *marry her!*!"

Ingenuous Dottie is not very bright but she doesn't have to be, she's rich. She is played by Joanna Marshall, fresh and cute in bobbysox and saddle shoes. Tony Simotes is the company clown, George, good at taking falls. David Ross Betner is the romantic one, Tony, secretly (but why secretly?) married to Marge, smoothly played by Elizabeth Detterich. Kate, the other svelte sophisticated one, is played by Colleen Minahan. It was she who slipped the Mickey to Muriel, Dottie's prissy friend from Boston. It knocks her out cold. Muriel is played by Patrice McGuirk, a prim contrast to the stage-struck zanies. Lee Zara is incisive as the breezy landlady, a pleasant slob in hairnet and knee socks. Dwight Larick provides respectable maturity as Dottie's dad, a publicity-hungry politician. Jim Hudson is interestingly eccentric, though hardly awe-inspiring, as the great producer whose real passion is the Escoffier Society. Two men in blue offer standout bits as policemen who break in on a noisy rehearsal while the producer's gumbo simmers. They are Jim Hudson and Jack Frey.

James Riddle's realistic set is strewn with meaningful memorabilia, like Ruth Chatterton and Lili Damita posters. Garland W. Riddle's costumes have a nice authenticity, and so do the hairdos. Fred Goodman's sound is excellent, especially those snatches of old radio programs.

This is a frothy, zany show performed at breakneck speed. It pleases its Megaw audience; and playwright Swann, who traveled from Northern California with his wife to attend opening night, also expressed approval. The Megaw people have a way of making their patrons feel not just welcome but cherished, which is a part of the total theatre experience that may have something to do with their continuing success.

—POLLY WARFIELD

Ken Freehil, Lee Zara and Tony Simotes in a scene from "Out of the Frying Pan."

Curtains Up



STYLERS

On the lighter side, "Out of the Frying Pan," a comedy by Francis Swann, presents a humorous look at six young performers struggling to break into show business while living under one roof in the New York theatre district during the 1940's.

The Megaw Theatre's production is fast-paced and funny due to the antics of its lively cast. The play is devoid of any message or moral meaning. It is meant mostly to entertain and perhaps to give a glimpse of actors and their near-manic devotion to the craft, as told through the words of a playwright who was once a struggling actor in the same city. As such, it has the wacky charm of a 40s comedy or an "I Love Lucy" episode. People enter at inopportune moments: a bewildered landlady keeps barging in during the middle of a scene rehearsal and a policemen interrupt the performance of a murder-mystery without realizing it's all a show.

As one might expect, the actors--three men and three women--are starving, out-of-work artists waiting for the "big break." They keep preoccupied by rehearsing a play they want to perform before a top-flight New York producer, Arthur Kenny. Kenny lives one floor beneath them in the apartment house. Through a hole in the radiator pipes, the hopeful actors can peek at him one story below.

One of the girls, Dottie, is the original tenant of the apartment and is supported by her father, Alfred Coburn, a Boston politician who thinks his daughter is rooming with two other actresses. What Dottie's father doesn't know is that there are also three young men sharing the living space as well.

When Coburn comes to New York on an unexpected visit, the household reaches a state of frantic mayhem as the three men--George, Tony and Norman--scramble to get out before Dottie's father comes in.

Despite clever guises, the three actors are inadvertently discovered by Coburn, who orders Dottie to leave New York and

return home to Boston.

The actors find themselves trying to convince the producer to watch them perform their version of his play as well as dealing with day-to-day survival.

By the end of the play, things are brought to a satisfactory state.

All six of the actors and actresses playing the performers--Tony Simotes, Ken Freehill, David Ross Betner, Colleen Minahan, Elizabeth Detterich and Joanna Marshall--present amusing characterizations. Especially memorable are Simotes for his portrayal of the brash, playful George and Marshall as the dim-witted but kind-hearted Dottie.

Lee Zara as Mrs. Garnet, the simple-minded landlady, is particularly funny. She plays the role with a good sense of comic timing and the proper gestures and tone of voice to make her lines laughable.

Patrice McGuirk adds the appropriate touches--wide-eyed looks and hesitant manner--to her portrayal of the gullible Muriel.

Dwight Larick as Alfred Coburn is properly huffy and indignant and Jim Hudson as Arthur Kenny makes his character seem a bit eccentric in his culinary tastes.

Jack Frey and Hugh Maguire add colloquial color as two cops who are suspicious of criminal activity in the actors' apartment.

The set design and decor by James Riddle and the costumes by Garland Riddle adequately create the setting of a cluttered actors' hang-out.

Director Sydney May Morrison keeps the temp brisk and the actors almost continuously moving.

"Out of the Frying Pan" doesn't leap into the realm of poignancy or high drama. Its flavor is more in the line of old-fashioned and unpretentious fun.

"Invitation to a March" runs Friday and Saturday at 8:30 p.m. and Sunday at 5 p.m. through March 30 at Theatre Aghape, 139 N. Golden Mall, Burbank, 846-7897.

"Out of the Frying Pan" plays Thursday through Saturday at 8:30 p.m. and Sunday at 5 p.m. through April 6 at Megaw Theatre, 17601 Saticoy, Northridge, 881-8166.

Jay Stanley

The Megaw Theatre with Sydney Mae Morrison as Executive producer and Elaine Mae as Artistic Director seem to have a knack for putting on productions that appeal to live theatre goers . . . Their '99 seat waiver house seems never to have a vacant seat and many times productions have to be extended. With the choice of "Out of the Frying Pan" by Francis Swann, Ms. Morrison has masterfully directed the 12 character cast with absolute precision and timing which are two ingredients all comedies must have. All the performers, Ken Freehill, Tony Simotes, Lee Zara, David Ross Betnee, Patrice McGuirk, Colleen Minahan, Elizabeth Detterich, Joanna Marshall, Dwight Larick, Jim Hudson, Jack Frey and Hugh Maguire, keep the three acts constantly moving with laughter and fun. Opening night Dwight Larick, especially in the first act, seemed overly nervous and struggled to keep up with his fellow performers.

"Out of the "Frying Pan" is top notch all the way, which is what is expected from the Megaw and its staff. The cluttered set of a small brownstone apartment shared by the multiple hopeful actors was expertly designed by James Riddle and Garland W. Riddle's costumes, as usual, are up to par. The Megaw with "Frying Pan" will enjoy another hit with their third play of the season.

'Frying Pan' simply fails to sizzle

By Rick Talcove

Once upon a time, theater was able to exist quite nicely on mediocre plays. No, not on Broadway but in stock companies. In this special atmosphere of quick-change play producing, a company of actors rehearsed one play during the day while performing another play at night. In most cases, scripts were limited to one- or two-week runs. Thus, in 26 weeks, actors could work in a dozen or more plays.

Currently, the Megaw Theater in Northridge is offering Francis Swann's "Out of the Frying Pan," a stock company play if there ever was one. True, Swann's play had a Broadway production 40 years ago, but in its writing and characterization,

Stage in Review

it's strictly one-dimensional all the way down the line.

It would be pleasant to report that the Megaw was able to find some hidden hilarity in Swann's script, but that just isn't the case. Director Sidney May Morrison makes a valiant try to give the puffing play some life, but all the screaming and running around adds up to very little.

The plot has to do with six young would-be actors — three boys and three girls — living platonically in an apartment over the residence of a famed producer. Naturally, by play's end, the producer has given all the green youngsters roles in

one of his touring companies.

Swann's play is innocent enough, but its farcical moments simply don't pay off for theater-going in the '80s. Unfortunately, neither do the performances at the Megaw. This critic likes to think he's sensitive to performers and their quest for careers. But on this occasion, no one seems particularly outstanding in this rather routine evening.

The production's liabilities extend to James Riddle's set design, which is as simple as the play requires but which also is quite charmless — despite a few vintage theatrical posters on the walls.

There are plenty of vintage farces around, but "Out of the Frying Pan" simply isn't one of them.

Saturday, March 1, 1980

Valley News / March 1, 1980

Section 2, Page 5

Leisure
Sports
Food
Entertainment

FRIDAY CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES TIMES

FEBRUARY 22, 1980

'FRYING PAN' PLAYS AT MEGAW

"Out of the Frying Pan" is the kind of show-biz comedy you see on the late show: a group of swell kids trying to make it on Broadway and having a great time starving till they do. Although Francis Swann based the show on his own life, wouldn't you know it, when it was first produced in New York 40 years ago (and later as a movie called "Young and Willing"), he didn't get the part he wrote for himself.

Things came pretty much full circle opening night at the Megaw production when the theater flew him to L.A. to see its version of his play. The mood on stage was festive, as it was after the show when the gumbo that plays a big role in the story was served.

For the most part, the actors have the same spirit and the same line readings real 1940s actors had, and director Sydney May Morrison invented some fancy falls and other feats for scenes like the one where a fellow pretends he's a lunatic so the father of the one roommate with money

won't discover she's living with boys as well as girls and take her (and his money) back to Boston. The plot doesn't go very far, so there'd better be a lot of business.

Joanna Marshall is delightfully dumb as the rich woman and the other roommates fill their roles well, although Ken Freehill might give more indication of his budding feelings for Marshall. The only person really miscast is Jim Hudson as the big producer who really wants to be a cook. Nothing in his too-laid-back personality suggests that he could ever be a wheeler-dealer or an executive; even one who'd rather be in the kitchen. In a show like this one, recognizing the stereotypes is half the fun.

"Out of the Frying Pan" plays at the Megaw Theater, 17601 Saticoy St., Northridge, 881-8166, Thursday-Saturday at 8:30 and Sunday at 5 p.m. through April 6.



Hollywood, California-90028, Monday, February 25, 1980
Newspaper Second Class
55 20 Pages

Legit Review

Out Of The Frying Pan

(Megaw Theatre; \$5.50 top)

"Out Of The Frying Pan," farce written by actor Francis Swann in the early 1940s and latter turned into the film, "Young And Willing," is a creaky vehicle that Megaw Theatre has dusted off and is offering its current subscription audience.

Director Sydney May Morrison demonstrates a fine talent for staging farce, but no matter what is done for this comedy nothing is going to salvage it.

Played by thesp's not experienced enough to play farce, show comes off as a limp community theatre effort. Even the seasoned pros get short shrift from this script.

Possibly risque when curtain first went up on it in 1941, "Frying Pan" concerns a group of struggling young actors living together (three boys and three girls) in an apartment above the one a famous Broadway producer occupies. Object is to get him to see their talents so they can break into showbiz.

One girl, the dum-dum of the group, is the daughter of a Boston politician and that's where they get the rent money from. Daddy, of course, arrives and threatens to call the whole thing off. But Marx Brothers-like antics save the day.

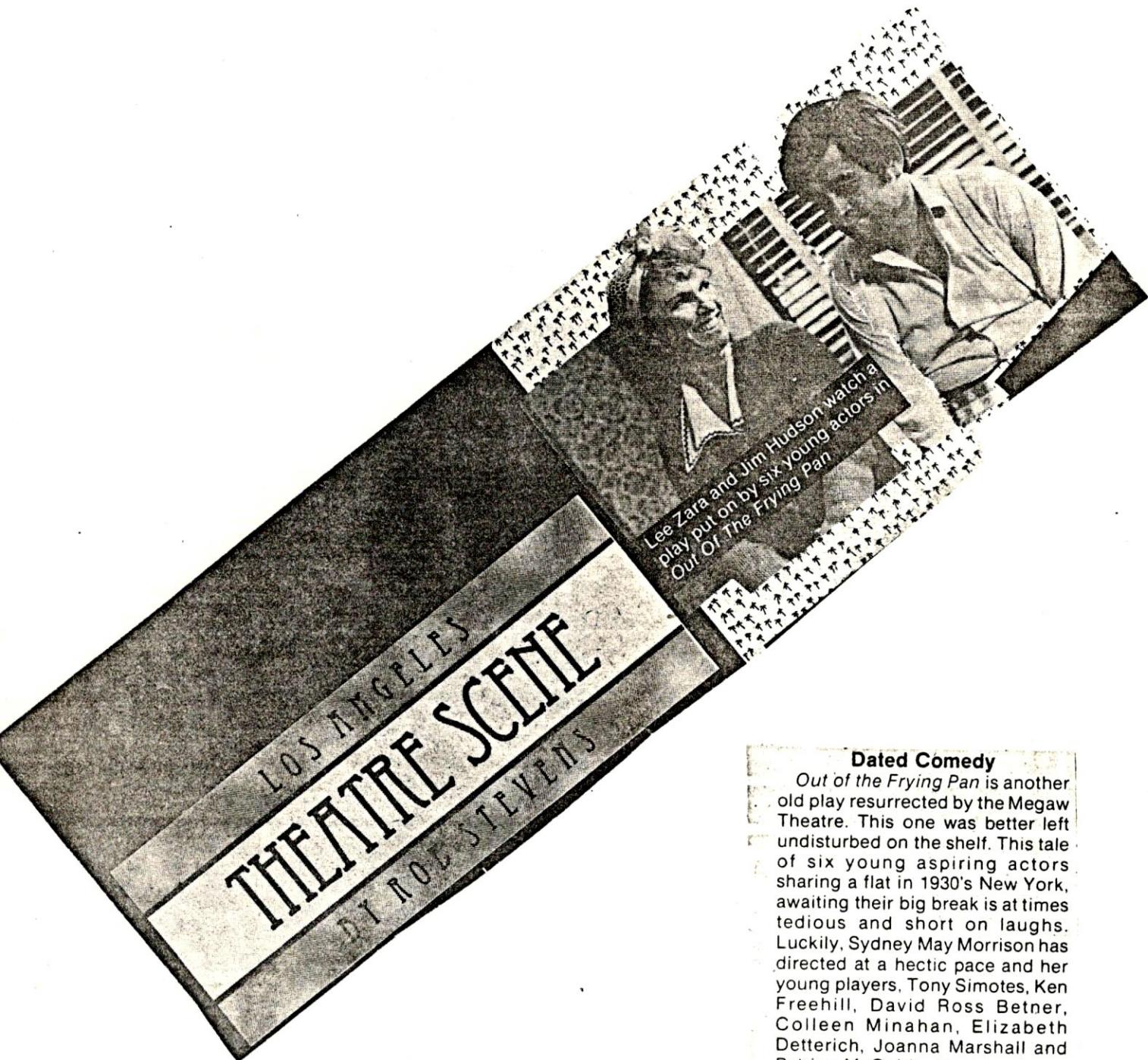
Tony Simotes, Ken Freehill and David Ross Betner are the trio of actors, none of whom cuts very good figures on stage. Lee Zara plays the landlady overly broadly. Colleen Minahan and Elizabeth Detterich are a little more in control of their roles as members of the troupe. Joanna Marshall is rather good as the giggling dimwit of a politician's daughter. Patrice McGuirk is good as a visiting friend from Boston who's likely to tell daddy everything.

Dwight Larick is daddy and plays him with a bluster and brusqueness that he can't muster into credibility. Jim Hudson is a little too laid back as the producer, but Jack Frey and Hugh Maguire cut comic figures as policemen.

Morrison has a few good staging bits that elevate the show, but overall it falls under the weight of 1940's humor which is unfunny in 1980.

James Riddle has provided a good set and Lynn Ziats some good lighting. Garland W. Riddle's costumes are directly from the pre-World War II racks.

Although a valiant attempt that shows Morrison should try her hand at more substantial farces, this is not one of Megaw's better offerings. *Edwa.*



Dated Comedy

Out of the Frying Pan is another old play resurrected by the Megaw Theatre. This one was better left undisturbed on the shelf. This tale of six young aspiring actors sharing a flat in 1930's New York, awaiting their big break is at times tedious and short on laughs. Luckily, Sydney May Morrison has directed at a hectic pace and her young players, Tony Simotes, Ken Freehill, David Ross Betner, Colleen Minahan, Elizabeth Detterich, Joanna Marshall and Patrice McGuirk, possess charm. Her older players unfortunately lack it and are quite blah.

(Megaw Theat ~ 17601 Saticoy in Northridge. Thu Sun thru April 6. Call 881-8166.)

Women in theater gain visibility, support

By Bobbi Zane

For years women have been underrepresented in certain theatrical pursuits. There have been few female directors, even fewer stage managers and lighting directors. And of course actresses have long complained about the absence of roles which challenge their professional abilities.

This situation prompted the formation of a group called Women in Theater a couple of years ago. The women charged themselves with doing a number of things for themselves. They would work toward improvement of opportunities in all aspects of theater for women. They would try to improve the quality of roles being offered. They also got together to help and support one another and to provide advice and information.

To cite an example: The Megaw Theater in Northridge, run by Elaine Moe and Sydney May.

Valley Theater

Morrison, is a showcase for these two talented women. As producers and directors, both have achieved success and are now getting the recognition they deserve. They've also made it a point to provide opportunities for other women to work and grow.

In fact, Ms. Morrison is directing the current offering at the theater, "Out of the Frying Pan," described as a wacky comedy based on the upside-down world of hopeful young actors and actresses struggling to make it in New York.

The play opened last week and is scheduled to run through April 6. It plays Thursdays through Sundays. For tickets or information phone 881-8166 Tuesdays through Sundays between 2:30 and 7:30 p.m.

Another production featuring the work of women is underway at the Studio Theater at Cal State Northridge. It's "The House of Bernarda Alba," directed by Bobbi Holtzman, who has worked with the students previously in 1977 and directed the West Coast premiere of "The Just Assassins."

"Alba" plays at the university Wednesday through Sunday nights through March 1. For information phone 885-3086.

DRAMA SEASON —
"Out of the Frying Pan," a comedy based on the world of hopeful young actors struggling to make the big time, will continue at the Megaw Theater through April 6.

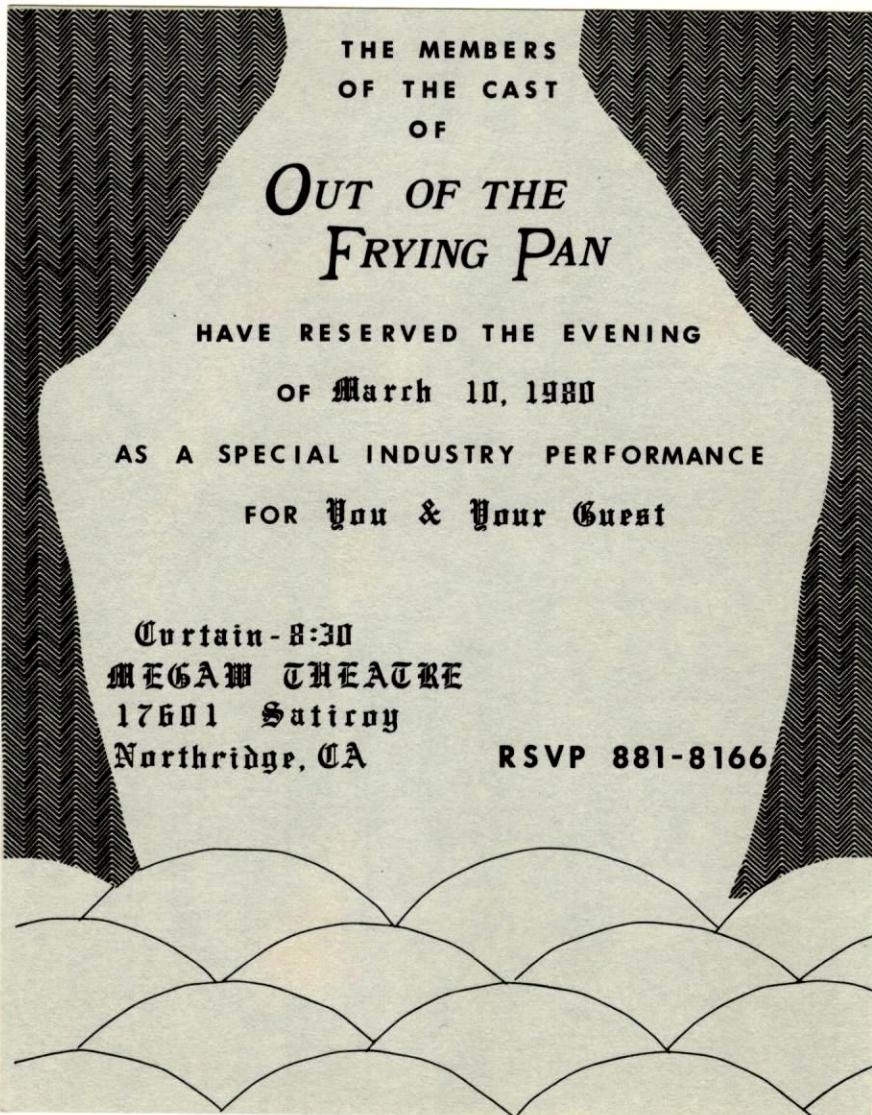
Next presentation in the season will be "The Philadelphia Story," scheduled April 25 through June 15 at the facility, 17601 Saticoy St.

The usual summer musical, yet to be announced, will complete the five-part season. All shows are produced Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:30 p.m. and Sundays at 5 p.m. Groups and seniors may make special arrangements by telephoning 881-8166.

* * *

VALLEY NEWS

Tuesday, March 4, 1980





THE
MEGAW
THEATRE

HOT STUFF Feb. 5, 1980
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN an American Comedy

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN, Francis Swann's wacky hilarious 1941 comedy based on the upside-down world of hopeful young actors struggling to make the "big time" in the "big apple" opens at the Megaw Theatre on February 15 for an eight week run through April 6.

Sydney May Morrison directs with Set Design by James Riddle, Costumes by Garland W. Riddle and Lights by Lynn Ziats. Featured in the cast are: David Ross Betner, Elizabeth Detterich, Ken Freehill, Jack Frey, Jim Hudson, Dwight Larick, Patty McGuirk, Hugh Maguire, Joanna Marshall, Colleen Minahan, Tony Simotes, Lee Zara and Charles Gherard.

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN will be performed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8:30 and Sundays at 5:00 P.M., February 15 through April 6.

RESERVATIONS: 881-8166 Tuesday through Sunday 2:30 to 7:30 P.M. daily at 17601 Saticoy Street, Northridge.

Elaine &
Sidney

Don't give up on me, please. One
day I'll be back — I have to do
a followup when you go Equity,
etc., don't I? Jim Moore

WETAW

THEATRE

PAGE: SHOW: Industry "Frying Pan" DATE: 3/19/80 DAY: Monday

X - ARRIVED
C - CANCELLED

NAME	X C	ADULT C	FAT	COMP	SR CITZ	STU	PRO	CHILD	TOTAL \$ DUE	DATE PAID	SEAT #	PHONE #	TTL RES	CURR
BARNICK, DEBORAH														
Watkin, Frontline Agency	2													
SAVAGE, JUDY AGENCY	2													
Kerwin, William Agency	1													
Wiescher, Novare	1													
Schmidt, Ted	2													
Roggin, Joel	4													
Goroch, Karen	3													
Sheppard, Richmond	2													
Hirschenson	2													
Day, Jeff	2													
Zornitsch, Sandy	3													

NAME	DATE PAID	SEAT #	PHONE #	TTL RES	CURR
SMOTES					
MONT & MINDY WEINERS - PAIGE FREETHUNK CHOCUSES					
DAVID MEYERS PROSECUTING FREETHUNK					
MS. SQUAWK					
?					
ROBESON ELAINE SYD FRANCY					
L.A.T.A. PUBLICIST FREETHUNK CHOCUSES					
CAST THEATRE (Genre) DIRECTOR ELAINE					
HANNAS BEEBEED ELAINE & SIB D'ANGELO					
CHOREOGRAPHER HOUSE					
Richmond MINE HENRY DIRECTOR SIMOTES					
TOOTEGAE PRODUCTION ?					
BIRBS ? ? who, what where ?					
NBC ? ? ? who, what why					

MEETAW
THEATREPAGE: 2
SHOW: Industry "Fayng You"X - ARRIVED
C - CANCELLED

DATE: 3/10/60 DAY: Monday

NAME	X C	ADULT	PAT	COMP	SR CITZ	STU	PRO	CHILD	TOTAL \$ DUE	DATE PAID	SEAT #	PHONE #	TTL RES	CUM FES
Called to cancel														
Mary Monroe -														
Mr. & Mrs. Shaw -														
Bobby Johnson -														
M. Monroe -														
Buckner H -														
Entertainment														
No Show -														
Betty Beck -														
Eve Brantley -														
Frank Bassett -														
Clare Neely -														
Chris Marks -														

Prepared by E.M.