

Theater

(Continued from 1-D)

show, "What's My Race?" After the bouncy announcer, Frasier appears in a caricature of the Negro, open-mouthed, rolling eyes, cracking voice, and urges his audience to buy Bleach and Man-Fun.

The sense of shame encouraged by Negro advertising is shown in a kind of reverse: "Be a stark white or jet black, golden brown or rosy tan. Think color. Be colored."

THE THIRD play, "Study in Color," is the most abstract in technique, and uses a gimmick, the masks, but this time there is the actual drama and the gimmick works.

The Rev. Boyd and Woody King, Jr. wear opposing masks. King is brilliant as the character in the white mask. Boyd, seated across the stage, wears his black mask and reads "Ebony" while King is relaxing in a lounge chair with "Town and Country."

The White-masked figure is bored with his colorless life and asks himself, "What is color on a human being? Is it like being a painting, walking around among non-paintings?" On the Negro-masked person the "blackness is hot," and he wants to cool himself under an angel's wings.

The obsession with color in both figures makes color the real thing and the human being the abstract thing.

thinks he can wear a different mask and still be himself, but he cannot, nor can the figures approach each other or exchange masks for they become the masks.

There is no "real me" inside. The strange, painful removal of the mask, the physically exhausting experience of donning a new mask is beautiful theater, without being explicit in language.

There are moments, however, where "Study in Color" weakens, such as the white-masked figure showing his prejudice through the old cliché of slipping and saying nigger instead of Negro.

WOODY KING, JR. and **Cliff Frasier** are uniquely professional actors and varied in experience. They have been students at Wayne State University as well as with

the Will-O-Way Players, and have appeared in experimental drama in local coffee houses. There are no finer actors around.

Rev. Malcolm Boyd is the Episcopal Chaplain at Wayne State, well-known for his Freedom Ride in 1961. The proceeds from the play go to the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity.

In earlier columns about theater in this area, we complained of a lack of substance in the choice of presentation. There has been no involvement or sense of reality in the plays we have seen this season. Now we are at the opposite pole: the play which is involved with the present but must, at the same time, have a sense of literature.

WHERE BILLY Sunday had drama in his sermon and exhorted

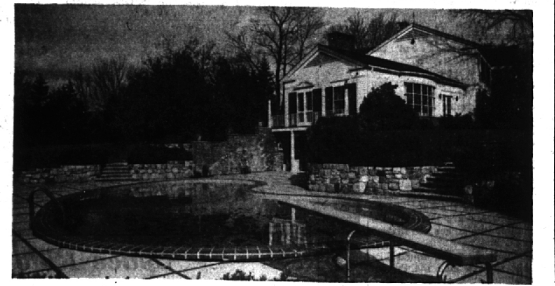
his revivalists to hit the sawdust sawdust trail to salvation. been selected for inclusion in "Best Plays of 1962-63," edited by Henry Heves and published by Dodd, Mead and Co.



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Not In The Script

Clowning around is part of the fun of rehearsals for little theatre participants, as actors Kay (Mrs. George N. Hillinger) and William Seebach made obvious last week during a break in run-through at Birmingham Village Players. Mrs. Hillinger, of 15969 Dunblaine, Beverly Hills, and Seaholm High School instructor Seebach, of 1011 Hazel, Birmingham, have roles in the musical comedy "Once Upon a Mattress." It will be presented at the Chestnut Street Playhouse at 9 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, Nov. 16, 17, 23 and 24. Tickets are at Grinnell's.

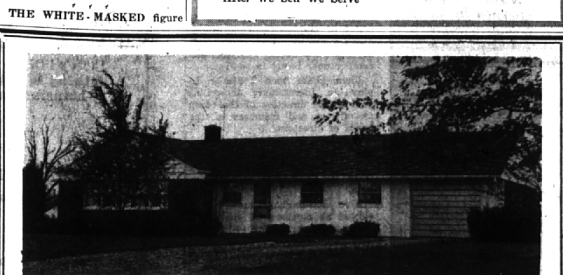
Cultural Events

(Continued from 1-D)

Nov. 17

VILLAGE PLAYERS—Birmingham Village players present "Once Upon a Mattress" at the playhouse, 1752 Chestnut St., beginning at 8:30 p.m.

WILL-O-WAY—"Study in Color," original plays by the Rev. Malcolm Boyd, at the Will-O-Way Theater, Long Lake Road (near Telegraph), Bloomfield Hills, at 9 p.m.



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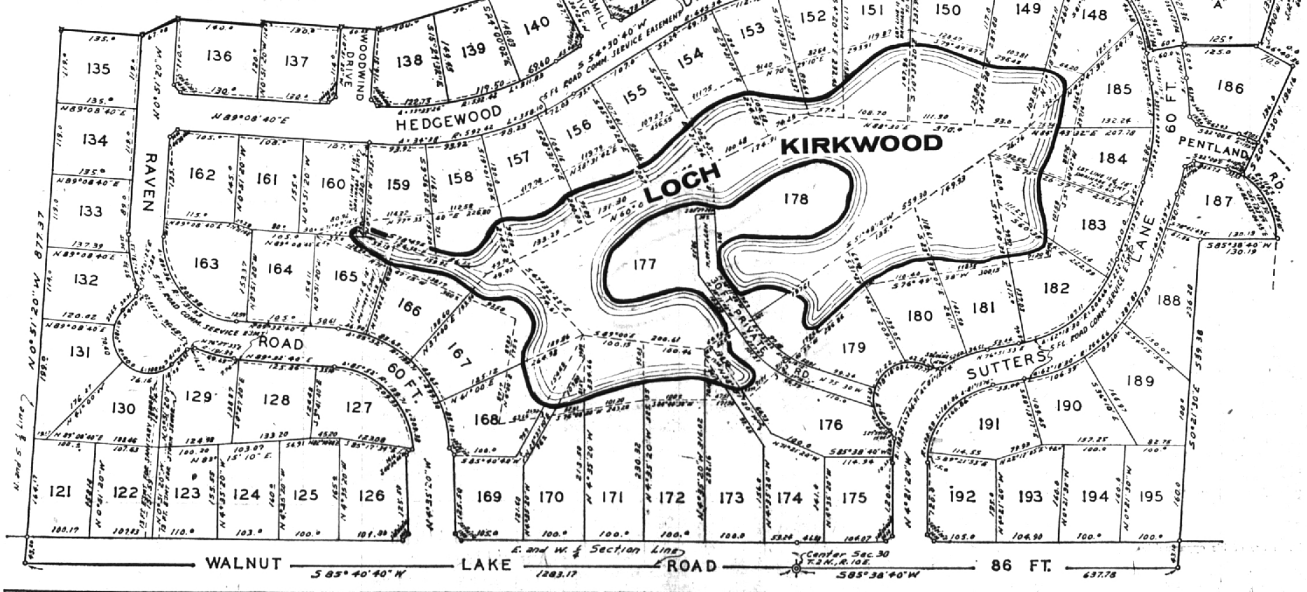
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