

Gilroy Community Theatre

Audition call for 'Superstar' musical

EVENING FREE LANCE Hollister, California, Thursday, November 12, 1981—

Gilroy Community Theatre has announced the dates for auditions for its March production of the rock opera, *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Auditions will be held in Room A of Brownell School in Gilroy, Second and Carmel streets, at 7 p.m. Nov. 16-18.

Callbacks will be held on Nov. 19, and rehearsals will

begin after Thanksgiving.

Directors Mary Ann Bruegmann and Joyce Flanigan will be filling many principal male roles for tenors, baritones and basses, they report.

In addition, there is one principal role for an alto / mezzo soprano. The audition board will also select an acting chorus, a vocal ensemble, and specialty dancers.

Dancers will audition Tuesday, Nov. 17, from 7-8:30 p.m.

Those interested in auditioning for a singing role should be prepared to sing a vocal selection from the show, said the directors.

Music and accompaniment will be available. For more information call Mary Ann Bruegmann at 842-8677.

GILROY COMMUNITY THEATRE has announced the dates for auditions for its March production of the rock opera, *JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR*. Auditions will be held in Room A of Brownell School in Gilroy, Second and Carmel Streets, at 7 p.m. Nov. 16-18. Callbacks will be held on November 19, and rehearsals will begin after Thanksgiving. Directors Mary Ann Bruegmann and Joyce Flanigan will be filling many principal male roles for tenors, baritones and basses. In addition, there is one principal role for an alto/mezzo soprano. The audition board will also select and acting chorus, a vocal ensemble, and specialty dancers. Dancers will audition Tuesday, Nov. 17, from 7-8:30 p.m. Those interested in auditioning for a singing role should be prepared to sing a vocal selection from the show. Music and accompaniment will be available. For more information, call Mary Ann Bruegmann at 842-8677.

Dancers, actors, musicians sought for GCT production

GILROY — Auditions for the March production of Gilroy Community Theater's rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* will be held tonight, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m. in Room A of Brownell School, 7800 Carmel St.

Callbacks will be Nov. 19 and rehearsals will start after Thanksgiving.

Directors Mary Ann Bruegmann and Joyce Flanigan will fill many of the principal male roles for tenors, baritones and basses. There is one principal role for an alto/mezzo soprano. The audition board will also select and acting chorus, vocal ensemble and specialty dancers. Dancers will audition

Nov. 17 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Persons interested in auditioning for a singing role should be prepared to sing a selection from the show. Music and accompaniment will be available.

Further information may be obtained by calling 842-8677.

GCT names leading cast for play

The Dispatch Tuesday, December 22, 1981 A5

Gilroy Community Theater has announced the names of those cast in leading roles for the 1982 production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Chosen to play the role of Christ is John Gratz, a performer with considerable vocal experience in productions in the Hollister area. Making his debut with GCT, Gratz has appeared in many musicals, including *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific*, and several plays, including *My Sister Eileen* and *M*A*S*H*.

Another veteran of the Hollister stage has been chosen to portray Judas. David Yanez is familiar to Gilroy audiences primarily as a dancer in productions such as *Kiss Me*, *Kate*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Sweet Charity* with Gilroy Community Theater. His most recent appearance was in *A Streetcar named Desire* at Gavilan College Theater.

Although making her dramatic debut as Mary Magdalene, Julie Kibbe is certainly no stranger to the per-

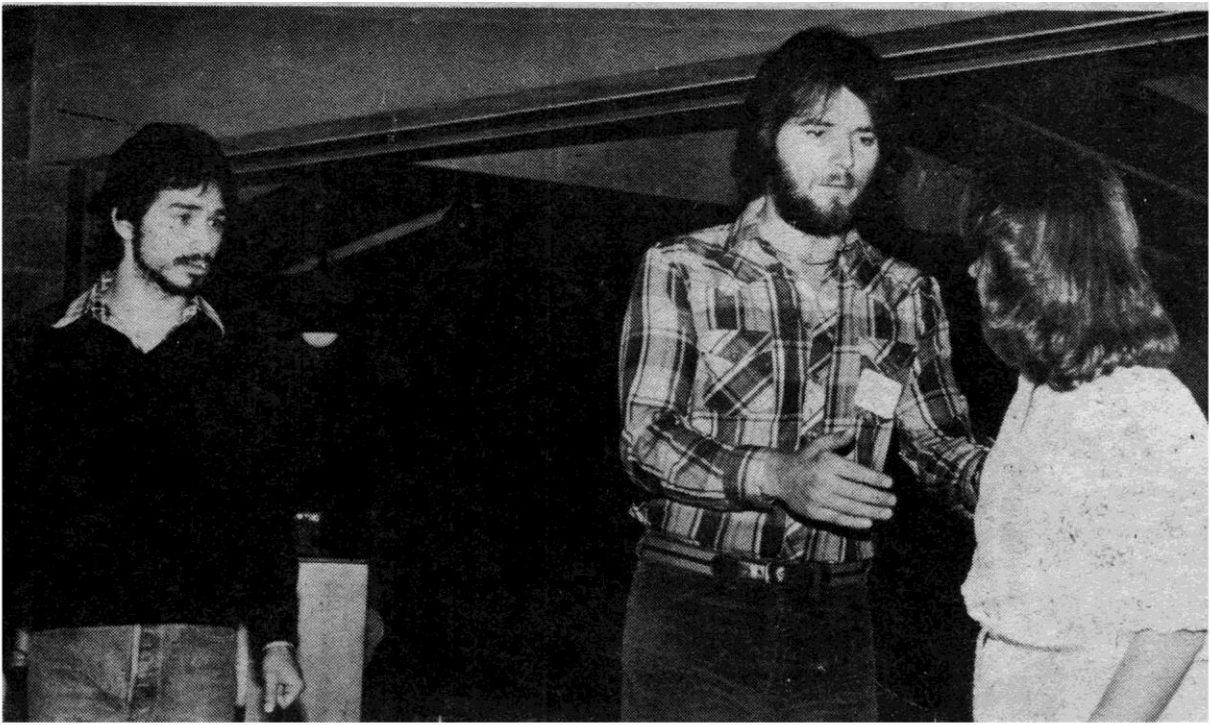
forming arts in the South County. Known for her ability as a vocalist and guitarist, Kibbe frequently performs for receptions, local senior citizen functions, and at Digger Dan's.

Others in the cast include Phil Skiver as Pilate, Richard Burdick as King Herod, and Wendell Swain as Caiaphas.

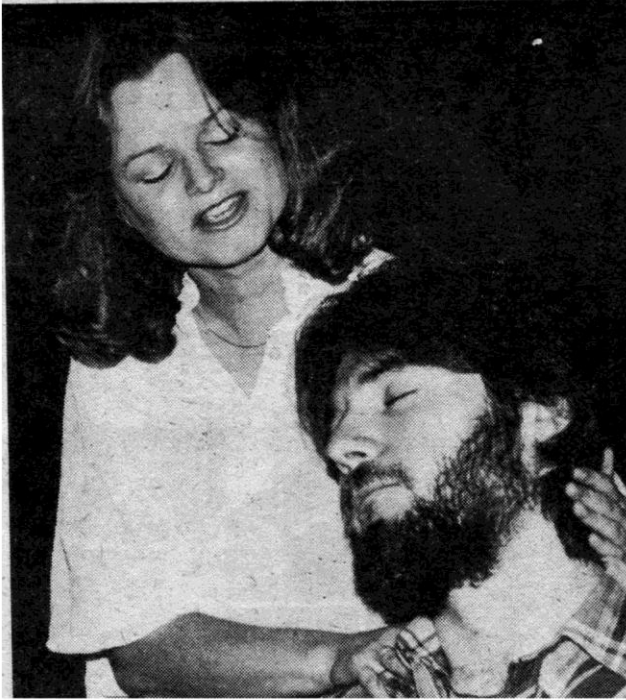
The auditioning panel deliberated for some time to choose the best performers possible from those who auditioned. "It's a good cast," says president Rosalie Andrews. "We're in for quite a show."

"The most difficult role to cast was that of Christ," adds director Mary Ann Bruegmann. "We wanted to find someone who looked like people might still be following him 2000 years later."

Performances will be by reserved seating at Gilroy High School auditorium. Production dates are March 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, and 27, 1982.



Gilroy Focus Friday, February 26, 1982 - 7



Breakfasters were entertained by stars of "Jesus Christ Superstar," rock opera which will be staged at Gilroy High School auditorium in March. Above, John Gratz (Jesus), David Yanez (Judas) and Julie Kibbe (Mary Magdalene) sing dramatic scenes from production. At right, Kibbe consoles Gratz.

The Dispatch-Wednesday, March 10, 1982

'Superstar' opens Friday in Gilroy

Seating will be by reservation only when *Jesus Christ Superstar*, the first Gilroy Community Theater production of the 1982 season, opens for a three-weekend run Friday at the Gilroy High School Theater.

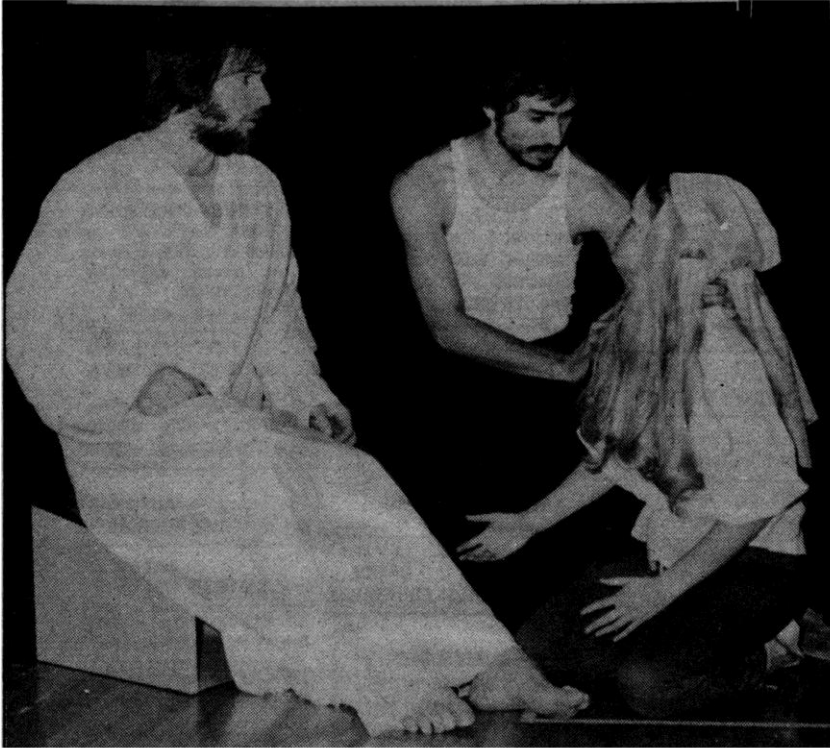
Director Mary Ann Bruegmann, a veteran of GCT productions, has added some new interpretations to the contemporary musical that retells the story of Passion Week.

John Gratz portrays Jesus, David Yanez, Judas, and Julie Kibbe plays Mary Magdalene. Others featured in the production are: Phil Skiver as Pontius Pilate; Wendell Swain, Caiaphas; and Richard Burdick as King Herod.

Tickets at \$7.50 each may be obtained by calling 842-SHOW from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The musical starts at 8 p.m. on March 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27.

Jesus Christ Superstar opens at Gilroy High School Theatre

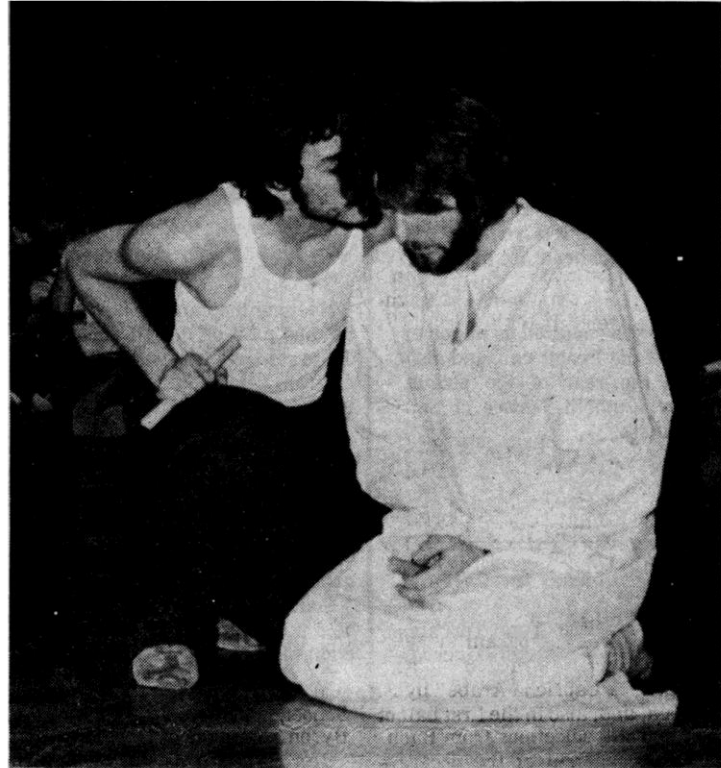
The Morgan Hill Times and San Martin News / Friday, March 19, 1982, - 11



The often controversial rock opera, Jesus Christ Superstar is the first production of Gilroy Community Theatre's 1982 season. The vivid retelling of the Passion Week story in contemporary music and dance, it stars John Gratz as Jesus, David Yanez as Judas, and Julie Kibbe as Mary Magda-

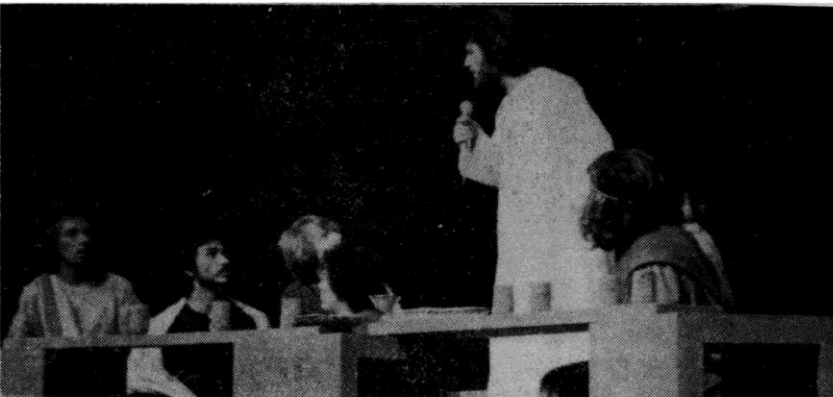
lene, pictured above, as Judas stops Mary Magdalene from comforting Jesus. Performances will be held at the Gilroy High School Theater, 10th and Princevalle Sts., at 8:00 p.m. through March 27. Tickets are \$7.50 for reserved seating. Telephone 842-SHOW.

EVENING FREE LANCE Hollister, California,
Thursday, March 11, 1982



'Jesus Christ Superstar' opens Friday

Hollister actors David Yanez, here as Judas, and John Gratz, as Jesus, are featured performers in premiere of the Gilroy Community Theatre season "Jesus Christ Superstar" which opens Friday at 8 at Gilroy High School for a three-weekend run. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays through March 27.



Jesus Christ Superstar talks to his disciples

South County Ministerial Assn.
c/O Rev. Don McMurray
Assembly of God
7411 Hanna St.
Gilroy, CA 95020

Dear Reverend Sirs:

Gilroy Community Theatre is currently in rehearsal for its upcoming production of "Jesus Christ Superstar". In our efforts to serve the community and its inherent needs and values, we feel our production is being executed tastefully, with high artistic standards.

It is also our feeling that this production will be of unique interest and value to each of you, and the members of your parishes. "Jesus Christ Superstar" can serve as a religious, as well as a cultural, experience when produced with artistic sensitivity. This modern representation of the Passion Week is a good stimulant for discussion groups of all ages, particularly youth groups.

The musical will be performed at Gilroy High School Auditorium on March 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27 at 3PM. If you are interested in observing a rehearsal or obtaining blocks of tickets for a group from your parish, please contact Publicity Director Chuck Myer at 842-2137, or call the GCT ticket sales number, 842-SHOW, M-F 1-5PM.

Thank you for your support of community theater.

'Jesus Christ Superstar' heads for Gilroy stage

By Hal Bohn

Special to the Free Lance

"Jesus Christ Superstar" is coming to the Gilroy High school stage March 12, courtesy of the skills and rehearsals of the players with the Gilroy Community Theater.

The musical, record-breaking and often controversial in its format of a sort of rock opera, relates its producer Mary Ann Bruegmann, is the first production of the Gilroy Community Theater's 1982 season.

It's been a long time since I saw the original production of "Jesus Christ Superstar," in San Francisco. Now, years later, here it is, produced by the Community Theater.

"Jesus Christ, Superstar," is the vivid rock opera recounting the Passion Week story in contemporary music and dance in time for the 1982 anniversary of this momentous moment at the dawn of Christendom.

In this interpretation, Hollister

thespians John Gratz stars as Jesus and David Yanez as Judas.

Director Bruegmann; musical coordinator, Joyce Flanigan, and choreographer and vocal consultant Debbie and Richard Nelson, have all combined their talents to make this a memorable production.

The rock-opera may be viewed at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, March 12, 13, 19, 20, and 26, 27 at the new and well appointed Gilroy High School Auditorium Stage, 10th and Princevalle, Gilroy.

It's reserved seating only, at \$7.50. Call 842-SHOW, Monday-Friday between 1 and 5 p.m. for reservations.

This ambitious and exciting production is the lead-off presentation of the Community Theater's season with ballads that are timeless and stunning, like "I Don't Know How To Love Him," and interpretive dancing that is part of the power of this

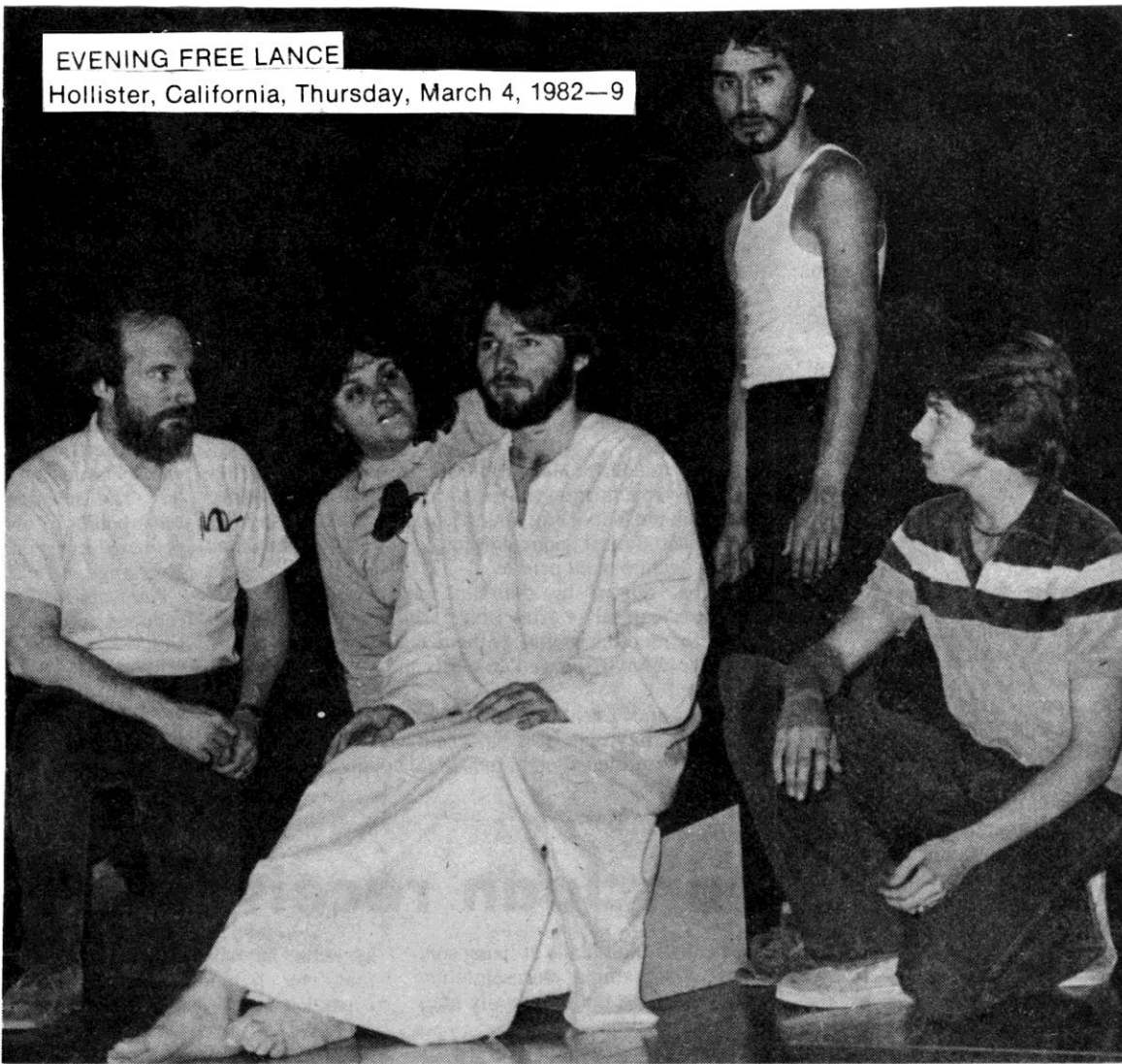
modern rendering of the agony, and ultimate miracle of salvation of Christ at Calvary.

A veteran of past CGT productions, Mrs. Bruegmann has added several new interpretations to the famed English musical, which became a movie of breathtaking movement, scenery and music.

Others featured in the Gilroy production are Phil Skiver as Pilate, W. Swain as Caiaphas, Richard Burdick in the snow-stopping role of King Herod, and Julie Kibbe as Mary Magdalene.

EVENING FREE LANCE

Hollister, California, Thursday, March 4, 1982—9



San Benito County residents appearing in Gilroy Community Theater's "Jesus Christ Superstar," opening next Friday at Gilroy High School, include, left to right,

Rod Pintello, as Annas; Penny Stevens; John Gratz, as Jesus; David Yanez, as Judas, and John Pritchett.

Tuesday, March 16, 1982 **The Dispatch**

Special effects require magicians

The Gilroy Community Theater production of *Superstar* also contains a dramatic effect: a wooden cross which emerges from the floor of the set. The elaborate tracking and braking system designed into the floorboards by a skilled workman allows the weight of the actor portraying Christ to actually be supported on the cross during the final scenes.

An unintentional special effect accompanied the first use of the cross at the play's opening last week. As Roman Martinez (appropriately cast as a Roman soldier) was "nailing" Christ to the cross, the rubber mallet slipped from his hand and bounced several feet straight up into the air. Miraculously, it landed right back in his hand, and he continued nailing right in time to the music.

Often we assume that the magic of theater is part of its mystique; in reality, it is skilled workmanship combined with entertainment.

Chuck Myer is employed by the City of Gilroy.



Jesus receives fatal kiss from Judas.

By Holly McFarland
Dispatch Staff Writer

GILROY — Beards are growing faster than weeds in Gilroy.

Some community leaders and local residents are actually pruning and pampering their new growth as if it were a bed of hybrid roses.

This sudden growth is also sprouting up in the most unusual places, at Gilroy City Hall and Crispino's Garden Restaurant.

But the beards are not a nuisance; they're a necessity. Respected city officials and local talented youth are using their new growth to get into character for their roles in the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

The Gilroy Community Theater (GCT) production begins its run March 12 and continues through the 13, 19, 20, 26, and 27 at the high school theater at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$7.50 and reservations available by calling 842-SHOW.

"The chief requirement was to grow a beard,"



Dispatch photos by Doug Parker

Sal Duckworth-Lanzo, Chuck Myer, Mike Dorn, Roman Martinez and their beards.

Community theater's new play produces fuzzy faces in Gilroy

The Dispatch Wednesday, March 3, 1982 C3

said Chuck Myer, who is a member of the Gilroy planning staff.

"And since I work for the city, why not work for the community at night in such a fine production?" asked Myer.

The trend at City Hall began when Myer started to let his hair and beard grow fuller. Soon he persuaded three of his working associates to join in, beard and all, and audition for the opera.

"Chuck roped them into it," director Mary Ann Brueggemann said with a smile. "I told him that I needed a Roman and an apostle, and soon other members of the planning staff auditioned."

"They were nervous throughout the auditions and it took some arm-twisting, but I'm sure they'll all agree it's been worth the effort," said Myer, who plays the high priest Zadok.

Those other planning staff members "roped" into the production include Mike Dorn and Sal Duckworth-Lanzo as two faithful apostles, and Roman Martinez as a Roman guard.

"I worked on the sets in other GCT productions," said Dorn. "This time I was really trying to get more involved, but it's taking a lot more time than I ever expected."

Another planning associate, Duckworth-Lanzo said, "I usually grow a beard in the winter anyway, and my boss in public works actually thought that I was growing it just to be in the orchestra."

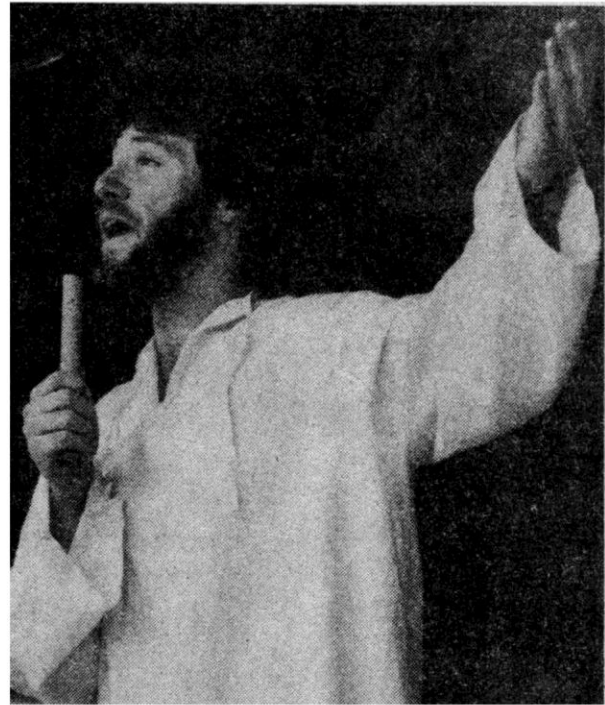
Their unshaven look has not gone unnoticed by several city officials who have jokingly compared the new hair style to a "zoo."

Dorn quoted one city council member as saying, "You're looking more religious every day."

But the motley actors at city hall are not the only ones who have decided to support community activities by swearing off razor blades.

Patrons of Crispino's Garden Restaurant have probably noticed a pair of waiters whose faces have been hidden behind neatly trimmed beards.

"This is the first time I even tried growing a beard," said Michal O'Connor. "And I wouldn't



John Gratz plays the role of Jesus.

have made a very convincing Simon in the first century A.D. without one."

O'Connor said he gets many questions about his beard at work.

"People say 'Oh Gee, you're in the show!' Then they'll ask when the play is and why I'm growing the beard," O'Connor said.

As soon as the play is over he is resolved to shave his growth.

Frequent customers at Crispino's particularly single out John Gratz, who plays the starring role of Jesus in the production.

"People ask me how I like playing Jesus, and I tell them that when I first auditioned, I never thought that I would be cast in the leading role," said Gratz.

"The beard has also made me look older and helped me fit the part, because in all the portrayals of Jesus, the actor always has a heavy beard," continued Gratz.

And for all the barbs the bearded cast members have had to endure since December when rehearsals began, perhaps the most appropriate comeback has been Myer's: "I tell people we're growing our hair for cultural reasons."

'Jesus Christ Superstar' opens before enthusiastic audience

By Brad Ryder

Gilroy Community Theater's production of "Jesus Christ Superstar," an ambitious project even for the most experienced of theater groups, opened Friday night to an enthusiastic and responsive audience at Gilroy High School Auditorium.

In spite of the difficulty involved with such a show, director Mary Ann Bruegmann has not only succeeded in realizing an improbable task, she has made it a likely—and likeable—candidate for one of GCT's best.

This production of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical version of Christ's final days is a colorful and lively two hours. You'll be tempted to sing along with such numbers as "Hosanna," "What's the Buzz?" and the title song, "Superstar," which is presented in nightclub style with Judas and the chorus in robes of shimmering white. And you'll very likely be moved by the heartfelt renditions of "Poor Jerusalem," "Gethsemane," and "Could We Start Again Please?"

This rock opera, complete with amplified music and hand-held microphones, is highlighted by outstanding performances, especially those of John Gratz as Jesus and David Yanez as Judas.

Gratz's low-key acting and smooth, mellifluous voice make him sympathetic and believable as the introspective Nazarene who can't help but question his destiny.

Yanez's Judas is the other side of the coin. He's an excellent, exuberant dancer and versatile singer who handles his demanding tunes with an abundance of energy and carefully studied movements. Yanez pulls no punches in revealing Judas' agony as he is manipulated into betraying his beloved master.

Julie Kibbe doesn't have enough to do in her role as Mary Magdalene, but she makes the best of it. She has a remarkable voice, and even with opening night's technical problems, her beautiful "I Don't Know How To Love Him" was the show-stopper of the first act.

Other notable performances are those of Wendell Swain as Caiaphas, Rod Pintello as Annas, Chuck Meyer as Zadok, and Phil Skiver as Pontius Pilate. Michael O'Connor appears as Simon, and Steven Schumann portrays Peter.

Of course I would be remiss not to mention the anachronistic yet funny "King Herod's Song," in which the gunslinging Herod (Richard Burdick) taunts Jesus, imploring him to "walk across my swimming pool" to prove he's really divine.

Perhaps the biggest surprise and greatest pleasure in this production is the chorus. Usually the chorus is only a mass of bodies used for background and atmosphere, but choreographer Debbie Nelson has discovered some talent. Working more together than apart, and singing on key—even in harmony—this chorus nearly steals the show. It's a disciplined, well-rehearsed group of youngsters (most of them look to be in their teens) who surround Jesus, lauding him, appealing to him, and ultimately condemning him.

The chorus includes: Laura Youngwerth, Cyndie Flanigan, Lori Castro, Lorrie Mertz, Sharon White, Torie Berger, Susan Gonzales, Terri Koehn, Roman Martinez, Eric Vianelle, William Bennecke, Jr., Mark Benthimer, Joe Margo, John Prichett, Christopher Temple, Melanie Fallis, Lisa Mertz, Suellen Rowilson, Penny Stevens, and Karen Thorsen.

Musical direction is by Joyce Flanigan, the orchestra is conducted by Richard Nelson, and the versatile unit set was designed by Joe Cardinalli.

For an enjoyable evening of good music, promising talent, and a well-told tale of love and commitment, drive a little and see a lot in Gilroy. "Jesus Christ Superstar" runs Friday and Saturday through March 27 at 8 p.m. at the Gilroy High School Auditorium.

'Superstar' earns topnotch, supergood ranking

By Joanne Rife
Special to The Dispatch

3/16/82
Gilroy Community Theater's production of the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a Go-See-It.

It is a supercharged, supergood Superstar. Which is not to say it is without flaws, because it has them, but it is marvelous theater. It is a toned-down version of the eruption that hit Broadway in 1971, described then as "raw, often indigestible."

The dilution has left the South County with an energetic, often garish musical. Under the quick pace of director MaryAnn Bruegmann, *J.C. Superstar* is probably the better for its blander appearance — it is, this time, digestible. Still spicy, but it will stay down.

There are two standouts in a generally good cast. David Yanez as Judas gives an electric performance and Julie Kibbe as Mary Magdalene presents a lovely sea of calm in the midst of terror and suffering. Both characters are caught in the web of Jesus' last seven days when "the movement" was going awry. Both are trapped by their love for a man who is on an inexorable path to martyrdom. Judas, a PR type who could see Jesus' actions would lead to death, expressed his love in betrayal; Mary Magdalene, seeing the pushing and pulling on Jesus by his followers to "cure me," "feed me," "clothe me," expressed her love in giving sanctuary.

The part of Judas is far and away the meatiest in the play. He is a man who betrays the leader he loves with a kiss, who dies in agony, and because what he does is ordained by God, has no choice. Yanez is an excellent dancer, empowered with grace and electric strength. He sings too, and if one will remember this is rock music, quite well. The human voice is an instrument of torture in rock music.

And then we come to a voice that shone like a full moon on a summer night. Kibbe is superb. Of course, she has the best music — the lyrical *Everything's All Right* and the lovely *I Don't Know How to Love Him*.

John Gratz is Jesus, a difficult and rather ill-defined role. Hidden under the rock music is a good voice, which is heard in *Gethsemane (I Only Want to Say)*. The part is an odd juxtaposition of calm,

exhaustion, fear and pain. Perhaps because the characters never understand Jesus, neither does the play. The man and his purpose are lost. He has no control over the events, they wash by and over him, and because he lets them happen, he is a difficult character in a theatrical sense. Gratz does what he can, but it is a part that is thankless from the beginning. In a way the title is misleading. Although the story revolves around Jesus, the star, the superstar of the show is Judas.

Another standout is Phil Skiver as Pilate. He has a very good voice and sings so that the words are understandable.

Wendell Swain as the high priest Caiaphas is a commanding presence, although his singing is labored. His two cohorts, Rod Pintello as the sneaky Annas and Chuck Myer as the devious Zadok are adequate, but improved as the night wore on.

There is one jolting scene (that is to say, more jolting than the other scenes) with Richard Burdick as Herod, that is the only respite from anguish, betrayal, denial and death.

The costumes are outstanding, with credit going to Bonnie Mertz and Carol Dodge. Lighting underscores the moods and is very effective by Tom Traf-ton. The set is lull but utilitarian; maybe a good thing with all the other hoopla.

Debbie Nelson's choreography is a delight and the chorus of dancers and singers the best I've seen at GCT. Kudos should go to Joyce Flanigan for the musical direction, which is excellent, and Richard Nelson, who wrings professional sounds out of his orchestra.

In fact, *Superstar* is not everyone's cup of tea. The discordant, amplified music, the angular, stylized dances, the garish light and the aspects of good and evil entwined heap onto themes of destruction and death. This is not Christianity triumphant, and there is little to soothe the suffering and corruption.

For all these problems, built-in, GCT's rendition is entertaining, often thought-provoking, well done and highly recommended. It will beat anything on TV and most movies for a night out. But be warned: it is a witch's brew.

'Superstar' good community theater

By Chandler Briggs

"Jesus Christ Superstar," under the direction of Mary Ann Bruegmann, produces an anticipated watered-down version of the original production. The GCT handles the job adequately, although not without some individual success.

The show begins fairly slowly, with everyone seemingly waiting for each other to relax.

Review

Jesus, played by John Gratz, seems to be the center of attention to the actors as well as the audience. Jesus is a full part which Gratz carries with admirable fluidness, especially noting that it is his first lead role in a production.

Vocally, Gratz also does a nice job. His voice powers through as one of the better of the evening along with Mary, (Julie Kibbe); Annas (Rod Pintello) and Pilate (Phil Skiver); these vocals were handled with an active worthiness.

One of the better vocalists, Julie Kibbe, finally sets the stage with a soulful interpretation of "Everything's Alright" and "I Don't Know How to Love Him."

People slithering off stage from the scene before, however, create an amusing situation for the beginning of Kibbe's heart-rendering song.

Another standout in the play, though less in song than in dance, is Judas, played by David Yanez.

Yanez effortlessly uses the entire stage as a dance floor. His vocals could have been stronger; his vocals diminished the impact of Judas. But the portrait was interesting, nevertheless.

The comical interpretation of King Herod played by Richard Burdick is somewhat off-base.

Burdick is funny, which was good, but a cynical approach would seem to be more appropriate.

Both Burdick's singing and piano playing are decent, only the approach to the part of King Herod seems to come from left field.

The scenes that are the strongest are the crowd scenes. The choreography, handled by Debbie Nelson, is excellent.

Dancers through the crowd scenes and combined movements use the stage effectively.

All in all, the play is enjoyable enough.

The use of hand-held microphones is debatable. In a theater of Gilroy High School's size, actor projection should suffice. If hand mikes are to be used, the sound engineers should be on top enough to have the mikes turned up before they are used by the actors on stage.

The \$7.50 admission charge seems a bit steep for a Community Theater version of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

But to support a Community production we should be willing to bend some.

If you can afford the price tag, then go see it. Just don't expect a full bore professional presentation. It is a community effort by community people and supported by community people.



John Gratz portraying Jesus in Gilroy Community Theater's "Jesus Christ Superstar," playing Friday and Saturday at Gilroy High School.

(Chandler Briggs photo)