

GCT opens 'South Pacific' this weekend

GILROY — *There Is Nothin' Like a Dame* will ring from the Gavilan Theater stage at 8 p.m. Friday when the Gilroy Community Theater opens a three-weekend run of Rodgers and Hammerstein's hit musical *South Pacific*.

First in a three-production season, *South Pacific* has a 40-member cast led by Ted Sanchez as the French planter Emile De Becque and Ruth Mullins as Navy nurse Nellie Forbush. Patricia Kennedy will play the mischevious, beetle-chewing Bloody Mary, who is foiled by Dennis Charvez as the trouble-making Seabee, Luther Billis. Steve Schneickert and Julia Ines play the ill-fated lovers, Lieutenant Cable and Liat.

Others in supporting roles are: Erica Rizzi and Simon Pintello as De Becque's polynesian children; Tony Tomaro as Captain George "Iron Belly" Brackett; Phil Skiver, Commander William Harbison; Fred Schwarz, Professor; Rod Pintello, Stewpot; Jim Calbreath, Bud Adams; Tom Hepner, McCaffrey; Mike Kreft, Steeves and Jim Hernandez as Larsen.

George Costa heads the show's production staff. Working with him are Richard Nelson, musical director; K.T. Schwarz choreographer; Tom Trafton, light designer; and Tina Phillips, rehearsal secretary.

Familiar songs from the former Broadway show that starred Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin include: *Some Enchanted Evening*, *Bali Hai*, *I'm In Love With a Wonderful Guy* and *I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair*.

Dancing and singing in support of the stars will be: Nancy Nishimura, Susan Isenberg Warren, Ar-tress Cornmesser, Lori Cornmesser, Adam Self, Helen Huang, Judy Hetzel, Judy Langley, Marion Pintello, Whitney Pintello, Aggie Ternasky, Vince Ternasky, Sarah Taylor, Suellen Rowilson, Carol Harris, Nancy Harris, Jackie Frey, Barbara Bottini, Susan Chastang, Jim Hernandez, Dan Walters, Michael O'Connor, Chris Souza and Mike Dorn.

South Pacific will run Aug. 10, 11, 17, 18, 24 and 25. Tickets are available for all performances by calling 842-SHOW between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. General admission is \$7.50. Seniors and students pay \$6. Curtain time is 8 p.m.

Theater fans who would like to save money can still buy season tickets to GTC productions.

Season tickets, which include the price of dinner, are \$28, a 20 percent savings over single ticket prices for the three shows of \$35. Seniors and students pay \$26 for the season. Call 842-SHOW for information.

8/6/84



Kennedy and Charvez in 'South Pacific.'

'South Pacific' begins

Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic production, presented by the Gilroy Community Theater, opens tonight at Gavilan College and continues through Aug. 25. All shows begin at 8 p.m.; See page 3 for details.

Weekend Friday August 10, 1984

'South Pacific' opens tonight at Gavilan

Ted Sanchez will star as the French planter and Ruth Mullins as Navy Nurse Nellie Forbush when the Gilroy Community Theater presents *South Pacific* tonight and Saturday at 8 p.m. in the Gavilan College Theater.

South Pacific will continue Aug. 17, 18, 24 and 25. General admission is \$7.50. Seniors and students pay \$6. For tickets call 842-SHOW.

Among the cast, pictured right, are Hollister's Simon Pintello, Morgan Hill's Ruth E. Mullins, and Gilroy's Erica Rizzi.

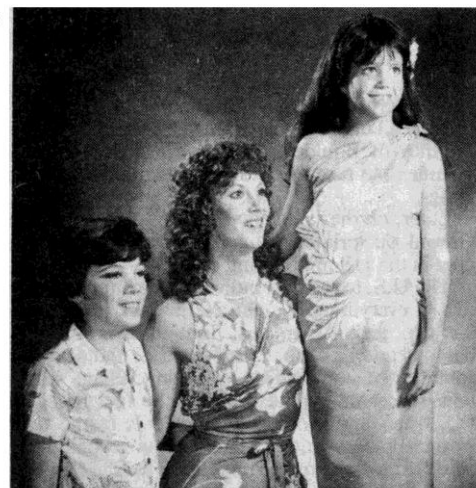


Photo special to Weekend

South County is well represented.

Music wears well; plot is a problem in 'South Pacific'

By Joanne Rife
Special to The Dispatch

There are the lyrical songs of Rodgers and Hammerstein, the magnificent singing of Ted Sanchez and the comic talents of Dennis Charvez, but the combination is not enough to wholly redeem Gilroy Community Theater's production of the old war horse, *South Pacific*.

It hiccups along, not making enough sense — one of the problems of a plot with too many boar's teeth, betelnuts and tatoos.

South Pacific needs exquisite timing to make the personal relationships believable. There is an element of magic — "Bali Ha'i will call you" which simply does not wash, particularly in the love match between the Marine lieutenant, Joe Cable (Steve Schneickert), and the lovely Liat (Julie Inez), but also between nurse Nellie Forbush (Ruth E. Mullins) and the French plantation owner, Emile de Becque (Sanchez). The spark, as they say, never strikes.

There is a rushed sense in several scenes when the need is to linger so that the emotion can resonate through the audience. Too fast and too short is a good way to describe the scene when Cable and Liat meet (I can never buy falling in love in three seconds), and the scene after Cable's death when Liat's future is touched with tragedy. Mullins rushes through some of her scenes with Sanchez as she plays Ensign Forbush as a twitterpated feather-head.

Mullins comes to life and strikes the spark in her comedy routines, *Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair* and *Honey Bun*. She has a nice throaty voice that belts when it gotta belt, but she struggles with the romantic *Some Enchanted Evening* and *I'm in Love with a Wonderful Man*.

Musically the show is fine. I'm probably showing my age, but I get all tingly with *Some En-*

Joanne Rife



chanted Evening, This Nearly Was Mine and *This Is How It Feels*, particularly with Sanchez singing. I mean: That man can sing. Each time I've heard him I keep wondering why he is singing in Gilroy when obviously he should be on Broadway. Well, Broadway's loss is Gilroy's gain.

If there were no other reason to see *South Pacific* (and there are), Sanchez's voice is quite enough. I'd like to know when his first record is issued. His acting, although not in the same class as his singing, flows very well. He moves with assurance, and if only I understood his French (?) accent, I would give him the gold medal.

Schneickert as Joe Cable is a problem. In an energetic, fast-moving, funny part, Schneickert is a show-stopper. But as a moony, love-hazed romantic second lead, he fails to deliver on the promise of his voice — which is very good.

Charvez as Bill is great fun, specifically in the *Honey Bun* number with Mullins (there the sparks do fly).

Bloody Mary brings up Bloody Mary, played very well by Patricia Kennedy. Of course, she has all the lines, and the songs.

South Pacific is interesting from a sociological standpoint. At first brush it seems to be about love and war, but the real "message" is about racial hatred. It hit Broadway in 1949.

I saw the musical again late in the 1960s, when indeed it seemed that the new era was upon us (then everyone only hated hippies, who loved everyone back, causing confusion).

But in 1984 the pendulum swings back and the lessons of *South Pacific* once again are relevant. It is not a better world — or if it is, we have moved ahead with tiny, mincing steps.

Perhaps it is well to see *South Pacific* just to hear Schneickert and Sanchez sing, *Carefully Taught*.