



Sonia Walsh and Vernon Gersch discuss their future musical collaborations in Town Hall's presentation of Neil Simon's "Their Playing our Song" at Rudder Auditorium Thursday night. June Gable portrayed Sonia and Richard Ryder portrayed Vernon.

Broadway hit 'Song' a madcap musical

by Rebeca Zimmermann
Battalion Staff
Broadway took a detour through Texas A&M University on Thursday night in the form of a dynamic musical comedy by Neil Simon.

"They're Playing Our Song," presented by MSC Town Hall, received loud and lengthy ap-

plause from the audience, with small groups giving the performers a standing ovation. Music for the play was composed by Marvin Hamlisch, and Carole Bayer Sager wrote the lyrics for the songs.

The opening music, which is energetic, brassy and a bit raucous, sets the tone for the performance's.

The play focuses on Sonia Walsk, a songwriter who buys her clothes second-hand from theater productions, and Vernon Gersch, a composer who uses a tape recorder for a diary.

Sonia is played by June Gable, formerly a regular on Barney Miller and an award-winner for her performance in "A Comedy of Errors." Richard Ryder, who has performed in other musicals, such as "Fiddler on the Roof," and in Shakespearean

productions, plays Vernon. The play begins in Vernon's apartment, with Sonia and Vernon collaborating on some songs. Personality conflicts immediately set in.

Vernon decides "she's a flake" after he waits for her to show up for a rehearsal. She shows up — but she's a day late.

Sonia tells Vernon that when she writes lyrics, she works with "the girls." These girls are voices in her head; they tell her what to do. She tells Vernon he uses "the boys" to hear harmonies in his head.

The "girls" and "boys" appear singing and dancing in several musical numbers. Vernon "broke the ice (in their relationship) with a bottle of wine," but he almost bashed her head with it first. She was late — as usual — to meet Ver-

non at a restaurant/disco. Instead of fighting, they both hear songs they have written and halt restaurant activities while they listen to their music. Sonia's ex-boyfriend, Leon, frequently calls her. Vernon says this is a "yo-yo triangle." Eventually, Sonia moves in with Vernon, complete with her giant crayola for the door and her weird wardrobe. During a recording session, Vernon and Sonia break up. He says he feels threatened and doesn't know who he is anymore. Sonia sings a tear-jerking song, "I Still Believe in Love," which later became a hit. Sonia comes back into Vernon's life when he is in the hospital with a broken leg. Finally, Sonia and Vernon get back together, thereby proving that happy endings are possible.

Review

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Engineering freshmen visited by professionals

by Beverly Hamilton
Battalion Reporter
Professional engineers visit freshmen classes in the Department of Engineering Design Graphics each semester to provide students with a better understanding of engineering and its application.

engineers act as consultants to students who have been assigned special design problems. Dr. James Earle, head of the department, said. After students have brainstormed, prepared solutions and organized their findings, the engineers return to review the presentations.

The engineers also are impressed with Texas A&M students, and their companies think of the University when they begin to hire, he said. The visiting engineers evaluate the graphics department and offer advice to the faculty, Earle said. They also help update courses to keep up with changes in industry.

The professionals, most from Texas companies, visit the classes twice a semester. This semester, 42 engineers from 30 companies will participate in the program.

This semester's assignments include a manually operated trash-compactor, a gate-opener for ranchers, an overhead projector adapter and a pole vault pit.

"The contact with industry is important," Earle said. "It seems to stimulate the students' interest. The program is a good show-

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