

CBS schedules new comedy show, 'Princesses'

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The ladies in the new CBS comedy "Princesses" probably will hang around the castle a lot.

"Listen, considering how much money they spent on the set I'm sure most of it will take place in the apartment," says Fran Drescher, who stars with Twiggy Lawson and Julie Hagerty. "The apartment is on two levels. It's gorgeous."

They play three women who fall heir for a year to a fairy-tale New York penthouse apartment overlooking Central Park.

One year's free use of the apartment is a wedding present to Hagerty and her husband-to-be. But Lawson, whose elderly European husband has just died and left her with nothing but a title, is already living there. When Hagerty's marriage falls through, best friend Drescher is more upset at losing the penthouse.

So, they all move in together, a solution that is more sitcom than fairy-tale. And, of course, the comedy requires that they don't live happily ever after.

"I can see it all going down the tube until Twiggy asks us to move in," Drescher says. "It's a chance for us to Americanize Twiggy, and she sees it as an opportunity to rub off some of her royal ways on us."

Her ways may not be too royal. She was found in a chorus line.

"I think my character, Melissa, is the type of

woman who says what everyone else is thinking," she says. "She has a refreshing kind of open and uncomplicated aspect to her. I think she will get them into trouble and out of trouble."

"I see her as more vulnerable than the others. She's got a tough exterior and a soft underbelly. She's into styles and hair and make-up. She's been exposed to a lot of rich people, so she's picked up their tastes without having the money."

Drescher is married to actor-writer Peter Marc, who wrote her last pilot, "Charmed Lives," and is currently writing one called "Diva."

"He's writing it for a middle-aged woman," she says. "He says I have the personality of a middle-aged woman. I'm settled in my ways."

Drescher and Marc, who've known each other since they were 15, pursued show business careers as teen-agers, but also had a fall-back line of business. They attended school and opened a hair-cutting salon at one time.

During the writers' strike in 1988, they decided to capitalize on their passion for gourmet food and cooking. They began making Loaf and Kisses Gourmet Croutons, which are sold by fine food stores and will soon appear in supermarkets.

"We're into food," she says. "I've always made my own croutons because you can never find a good crouton. I took courses in business. I learned how to market a product. We got a kitchen, designed the package and the business has grown enormously."

Eastman School begins study of effects of playing music on aging

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) - Before settling on a name, musicians in this group discarded such ideas as the Last Chance Band or the Grateful Alive.

Most of the members of the New Horizons Band have about 40 years of experience on the tie-dye clad youngsters at the Eastman School of Music teaching them how to play their instruments - little of it musical.

Along with having fun and fulfilling a few lifelong dreams, the band members are about to become test cases in studies to determine whether playing music has health benefits for an aging population.

"As far as I know, there is no time in which it is too late to play," said Frank Wilson, a California neurologist and author of "Tone Deaf and All Thumbs? An Invitation to Music-Making." Wilson organized a week-long conference on music and aging this summer around the exploits of the Rochester band.

The New Horizons Band is different from the hundreds of community and church bands spread across the country because its organizers were looking strictly for novices. Band members must be at least 50 years old.

When Roy Ernst, professor of music education at the Eastman School, placed a newspaper ad in January announcing the start of the band, he hoped for 30 replies. He got about 60.

His group is a mixture of people who have never picked up an instrument or have done nothing since high school band. A few musically proficient people were told they couldn't play the instrument they were used to. A piano teacher who joined had to play a wind instrument.

Playing largely classical compositions, members practice as both a large band and smaller incarnations. They've put on one informal performance so far, but are hoping for some public appearances this fall.

Ernst helped start the group with a grant from the National Association of Music Merchants, who sense a potential new market if the idea catches fire.

Band members practice twice a week, and Ernst reports "remarkable progress" among some of his charges.

After several weeks of being unable to coax a sound from the clarinet, 77-year-old Whitelaw Roemer has progressed to the point where he even composed a musical accompaniment to the poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

"It's always been a secret desire of mine to play an instrument," said Roemer, who retired after working 40 years at Kodak headquarters.

Dorris Nash, 67, found little time for the saxophone she played in high school after growing up and raising two children. The re-

tired medical librarian jumped at the chance to start again.

"The camaraderie is just marvelous," Nash said. "Everyone is just smiling and having a good time."

That's the most obvious benefit. The band gives people who may be lonely a social activity, and people who are less isolated tend to be more healthy, Ernst said.

But the University of Rochester's medical school will be looking for more hidden benefits such as whether learning to play an instrument lowers blood pressure or increases brain activity, said researcher Kenneth Swartz.

Band participants say that while learning to play instruments like tubas and drums may be physically more difficult now than when they were teen-agers, they're better motivated. Members are learning to play because they want to, not because they need an extra credit to graduate from high school, Ernst said.

"You aren't really intimidated by a music teacher the way you might have been as a child," Roemer said. "Back then, if you had played a wrong note, you might have gotten slapped on the hands."

They're even doing extra work without worrying about impressing a teacher; Roemer is taking private lessons, while Nash and some friends meet periodically to play while the band is on hiatus for the summer.

Concert unites new, old Yes members

Continued from page 3

that are seldom heard at the popular level.

The lowlight of the concert had to be the performance of keyboardist Kaye. He tried to be dramatic by jumping and "rocking" throughout the show - that may work at a Bon Jovi concert, but Yes is an innovative group with a complexity to its music. Kaye's theatrics were stupid, and he became a distraction at a rare rock show where musicianship and song quality actually mattered.

The show ended with a rousing version of "Roundabout," but the ending seemed abrupt. Still, Yes showed that a re-Union can be a step forward for music, as well as a look back.

Yes history rotates band membership

Continued from page 3

Wakeman both left and were replaced by Trevor Horn (vocalist) and Geoff Downes (keyboards) for the 1980 release, *Drama*. The group disembarked on separate projects after *Drama*, but Squire, White, Kaye and Anderson hooked-up with guitarist Trevor Rabin in 1982 for the 90125 project.

90125 featured the band's first number-one hit, "Owner of a Lonely Heart."

This same band released a follow-up *Big Generator* in 1987. After a variety of solo projects, Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman and Howe made an album entitled *Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman and Howe*.

Finally, while working on separate projects, ABWH and the current Yes decided to put their music together on one release, *Union* in 1991. So, the revolving door of Yes has stopped - at least for now anyway.

- T. S.

Kinison fails to appear on talk show

NEW YORK (AP) - High-decibel comedian Sam Kinison blamed some bad Chinese food for his no-show as the sole guest on a forthcoming "Joan Rivers Show," but his hostess on Monday blamed his non-appearance on booze.

"He did a program earlier today, 'The Howard Stern Show,' and he got upset when they talked about drugs and alcohol," Rivers told her audience Friday after waiting four hours for Kinison.

"He said, 'I've been slipping a little lately.' Well, he skidded," Miss Rivers said. She has devoted Wednesday's show to the circumstances surrounding Kinison's failure to appear.

Jama Podell, a production assistant sent to pick up Kinison at the Plaza Hotel, where the show had

put him up, said she found Kinison "reeked of alcohol" and was "staggering" when she found him in the lobby.

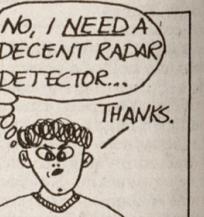
The comedian's brother, Bill Kinison, who also serves as his agent, told staffers two hours later that he would not be appearing.

Rivers took a camera crew to the hotel, but Kinison did not come to the door. His brother spoke briefly to Rivers, and blamed the comedian's behavior on some Chinese food he'd eaten after appearing on the Stern show.

Kinison also did not make a scheduled appearance on Friday's edition of "Late Night with David Letterman" on NBC, a spokesman said.

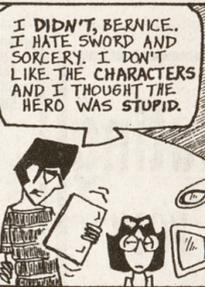
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