

# OF THE STARS

## IRV BENSON TOP BANANA IN SUPER SILVER SLIPPER SHOW

Big talent comes in a little package and Irving Benson is the man to prove it.

When Benson learned to walk and talk, it was destined that he would

become the number one vaudeville comic in the United States and he certainly has proven his talents. At eleven he won his first amateur dance contest. Acting came next and when he turned twenty-one he went into burlesque and became the youngest featured comic in this field.

A frequent guest on the Tonight Show and Hollywood Palace he is widely known as Sidney Shpritzer "The Man in the Theatre Box" on the Milton Berle show. Milton Berle and Bill Dana selected Irving over 200 comics to play that part.

Known also as a "comedian's comedian", he has worked for many years as "Top Banana" all over the country and has been seen in many of the leading Las Vegas Strip Hotel showrooms.

Benson, the very funny elflike comedian, appears nightly at the Silver Slipper in the Ga-



IRV

laxy Theatre with Barry Ashton's "Wonderful World of Burlesque." Also appearing with Benson is Marilyn Robertson, recently voted Best Performing Actress of the Year in Las Vegas; Sharon Dale, Miss Velvet; comedian Herbie Barris; singer Jim Hodge; comedian Charlie Vespia and the adagio team Lisa and Salerno.

## ENTERTAINMENT TRIP AROUND THE WORLD



DICK MCINNES

**THEATER TRIPPING.** . . ART MILLER'S "The Crucible" first opened on Broadway on January 22, 1953. Miller's drama about the witchhunts at Salem, Massachusetts was written during Miller's own ordeals with the infamous McCarthy hearings and it was quite timely. Ironically, today, 20 years later, it is still timely and the new production at the Ahmanson Theatre is excellent. Director JOE HARDY has brought the play vibrantly to life with such inspired casting as CHARLESTON HESTON as John Proctor, who should certainly disprove that ancient remark about movie actors not being able to do anything on stage. I must say I did laugh when in the play they asked hfm if he knew the Ten Commandments. INGA SWENSON and JAMES OLSEN, two of our finest thespians come through again with beautifully drawn characterizations. GALE SONDERGAARD is marvelous as Rebecca Nurse, and of course, she added a definite touch of irony since her career was literally smashed by the McCarthy hearings. It's a pleasure to welcome such a superb actress back. SANDRA MORGAN's Abbie wasn't quite right, she played it all on one level. BEACH RICHARDS and ROBERT CORNTHWAITE provided what laughs there are in the play and both were good. In fact, the rest of the cast was good.

Afterwards at a lush party at the Sovereign Restaurant such VIP's as ELIZABETH ASHLEY, EDGAR and FRANCES BERGEN, HENRY BERG-

ER with INA BALIN, JULIE ADAMS and ROBERT QUARRY, CHRISTINE JORGENSON (who had a long conversation with Miss Sondergaard in Danish. Turned out they were discussing "The Letter", a favorite Sondergaard performance), GLENN FORD, MARVENE JONES & GREGG JUAREZ, BRUCE DAVISON (getting congratulations on landing the role of Patrick in "Mame"). Bruce and his date kept coyly telling photographers they were in hiding and didn't want their pictures taken.

(However, sitting at the table right beside the buffet table in a brown plaid suit at a formal opening is hardly hiding) and many more well-wishers cheered the cast as they made their entrance. A good time was had by all.

**CASTING TRIP . . .** BETTE DAVIS has been signed for the leading role in a new pilot for NBC called "Hello Mother, Goodbye". KEN MARS will play her divorced son. . . KIM NOVACK will make her vidtube debut for ABC in "The Third Girl From The Left" written by DORY PREVIN. . . MICHAEL SACKS, so good in "Slaughterhouse Five" will join GOLDIE HAWN in her first flick for Universal, "Sugarland Express". . . BOB DYLAN and RICHARD JAECKEL signed to co-star with JAMES COBURN and KRIS KRISTOFFERSON in "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" for MGM. Super director SAM PECKINPAH directs. . . Las Vegas favorite RIP TAYLOR to co-star with NANCY DUSSAULT in the new CBS sitcom pilot, "Nancy Clancy".

**MUSIC TRIP.** . . ALICE COOPER was a smash in his European tour, playing to over 75,000 fans in a dozen concerts. After his concert at the Olympia in Paris, Alice was the guest of honor at a party which had among the guests, OMAR SHARIFF, BRIGETTE BARDOT and ALAIN DELON. Alice showed up in a special "costume" designed by PIERRE CARDIN. Now, if that isn't class, what is? . . . Astrology buffs will love DENNIS COFFEY's new album, "Electric Coffee". He wrote seven for the album, including "Capricorn's Thing," "Son of Scorpio", "Love Song for Libra", "The Sagittarian", "Twins of Gemini", "Virgo's Song" and "Lonely Moon Child". If your sign isn't there, don't write me, write Coffey.

Don't you wish the holiday season were all year around? I do.

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