

Professor Hosts New TV Series

Dr. Harold S. Marienthal, chairman of the Theatre Arts Department at California State College, Dominguez Hills, will host a 30-minute weekly television program beginning tomorrow.

The program, "Theatre Beat," will be aired at 9 p.m. each Thursday over KCET Channel 28.

The new community drama series is planned to display the work of Southland theatre

performing groups. The initial program will feature selected scenes from "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream" as produced by the Actors Workshop Theatre-40.

Dr. Marienthal has taught drama at the University of

Gets New Post

Frank S. Covaro, of 409 Via La Selva, has been appointed manager of management ad-

visory services in the Los Angeles offices of Alexander Grant & Co., certified public accountants.

Southern California at Los Angeles. He also has a number of television and production credits.

Since 1960, Dr. Marienthal has served as drama critic for FM and Fine Arts Magazine at the University of

Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

NEW YORK CITY — Any one who has seen the splendid design and craftsmanship in the new CBS building here cannot fail to observe a rather sizeable separation between the quality of the network entertainment programs and the surroundings in which they are conceived. Like turning out chewing gum in the Taj Mahal.

CBS president Frank Stanton is the taste-maker for his network at the executive level. This includes architecture. Recently I asked him: "Why can't the same stamp of style and sophistication appear on the entertainment seen on CBS?"

"I would be delighted," he replied. "I would also hope that the whole city of New York looked like this building. I'm never satisfied with our programming. And I don't say that as an attack on any of our people. I always expect more. We're still trying to find a way to do another 'Playhouse 90.' In concept that show was mine, but we had to wait years to bring it about. It is awfully difficult."

STANTON APPEARS to leave decisions in matters of entertainment quality to those in the program department, yet the programmers place any decisions of over-all quality on the upper executive doormat. Is there an unseen ghost between the president and the programming executives whose names are not listed on the building office directory?

As a matter of fact, there is. And Stanton invented him. He is the audience researcher whose mind is filled with the whirring of computers and whose sensitivities are replaced by numbers. Stanton joined CBS in 1935, fresh from Ohio State with a doctorate in psychology. From then on things were never quite the same.

According to Webster, a psychologist is one who studies human and animal behavior. Dr. Douglas Bush says a psychologist is one who pulls habits out of rats. Somewhere between the two lies the truth. In either case, a psychologist is not to be confused with a psychiatrist, who studies diseases of the mind. Had Stanton been a psychiatrist, the CBS concept of television entertainment might have been radically different.

THE AUDIENCE research methods introduced by Stanton helped to determine what CBS estimated to be public taste. The network geared its output to his estimate and has prospered to an extent undreamed of by most other types of businessmen. The research figures comforted the sponsor who was spending the money. The mass public, presumably, was getting what it wants. And in 11 years, Stanton was president of CBS.

Today, business is thriving, but I cannot fail to sense an uneasiness in the personality of this immensely successful man whose personal taste is undoubtedly offended by

which has been off the air for a decade. He could point to nothing that is of equal quality now on CBS, or that is being planned for the future.

But a network is not all entertainment. "Television does best with the things that are seen while they are happening," volunteered Stanton. A curious statement in face of the critical charges of ex-CBS news chief Fred Friendly appearing in Life magazine, and

about which Stanton has "no comment."

"I SINGLED out Frank Stanton for comment on taste at the top, not because he is the major offender on Network Row (he is not), but because he is a man of personal taste, style, and sophistication. That he is turning out chewing gum in a Taj Mahal is therefore disappointing. Stanton and his architect, Eero Saarinen, have given

CBS its shimmering Taj Mahal. Let's hope that it is used for something more stimulating than a mausoleum for a forgotten princess.

Business Confab

Theodore W. Ronnhelm of the Prudential Insurance Co. Torrance agency will attend the firm's annual Regional Business Conference April 10-13 in Palm Springs.

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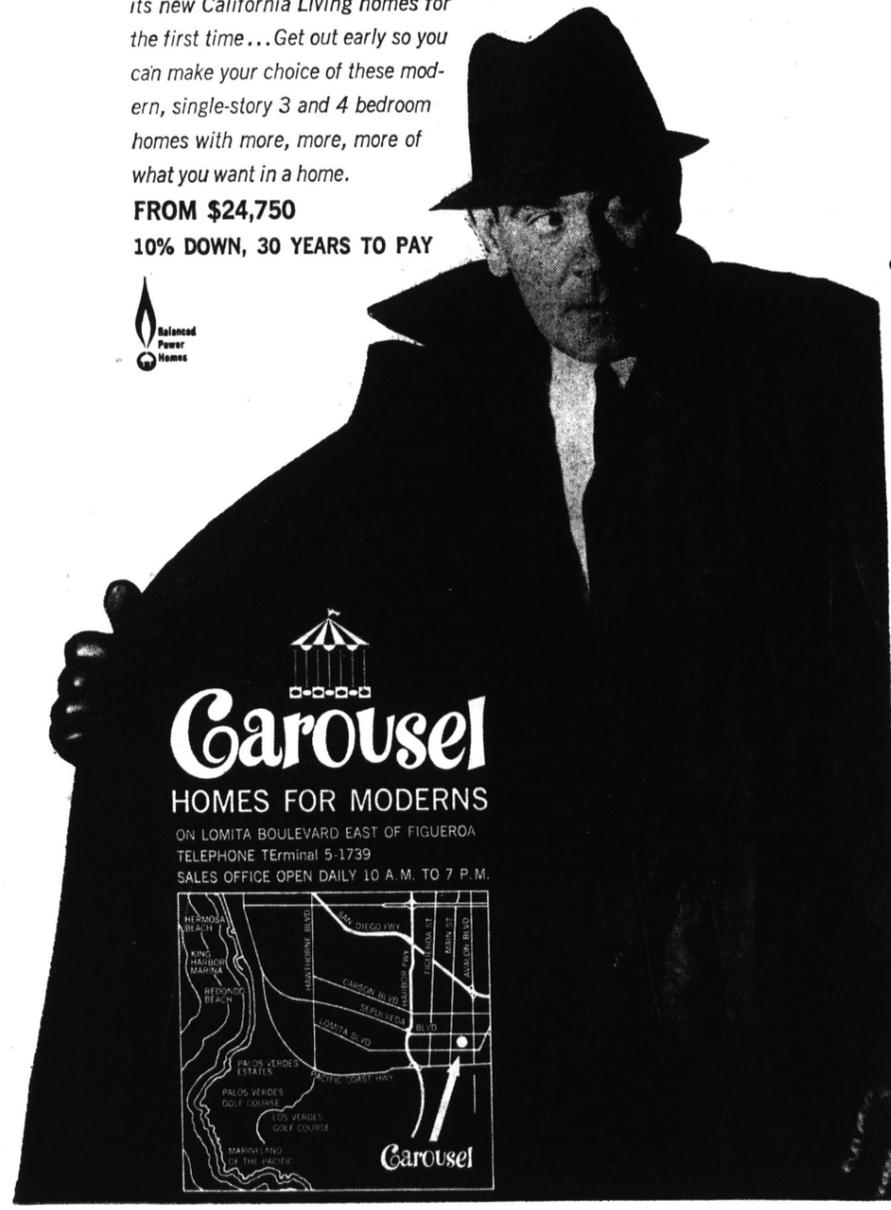
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