

Joseph's coat of many colors a modern day musical soup

by Rufo

Buchtelite Staff Writer

If you hear any young girls screaming on campus this week, don't worry. Most likely they are screaming because David Cassidy, who played Keith Partridge in the Partridge Family, is starring in the Kenley Players production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, playing at E.J. Thomas nightly through Sunday.

Based on the Biblical story of the boy who was sold into slavery by his brothers and who then rescued them from starvation, *Joseph* was written by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, a credit conspicuously absent from the program.

Rice and Webber are responsible for such hits as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita* and *Cats*.

This production of *Joseph* parallels productions of *Superstar*

in many respects; the most obvious being the selection of Biblical stories as themes.

Additionally, the sets and costumes are a mixture of the modern and the ancient, with Joseph's father and brothers wearing bib overalls, the presence of camels on wheels, and Joseph being bought with a sheaf of credit cards.

And Joseph, like *Superstar*, is veritable musical soup, utilizing the styles of country/western, calypso, vaudeville and 1960's rock.

The show's composers had their tongues firmly implanted in their cheeks when writing *Joseph*; and the performers followed their lead.

The brothers as the chorus amused and entertained, as in the dance number *One More Angel in Heaven*, which changed midway from a melancholy country song to a hoedown.

And everyone had a good surprise when the Pharaoh appeared and sang as Elvis Presley.

Two performers stood out in the cast, the obvious one being David Cassidy as Joseph.

Cassidy drew applause before uttering even a syllable, which is evidence of the advantage of having a solid reputation. And Cassidy did live up to that reputation, singing clear and strong with his expressive voice in numbers such as *Close Every Door*, and the hope-filled finale of *Any Dream Will Do*.

Cassidy was clearly professional in his stage movements and facial expressions, properly exaggerating them so they could be read in all corners of the theater, a technique not required in television.

Almost outshining Cassidy's performance, and in reality coming close, was Rosalyn Rahn as

the Narrator. Rahn played the Narrator in the Broadway production of *Joseph*, and the strength of her experience in the role showed, and earned her applause equal to what Cassidy received on his reputation.

Both Rahn's movements and singing reflected a quiet yet strong grace and dignity. Because of this, it is difficult to say who is more interesting to watch, Rahn or Cassidy.

The production was not without its problems, though. At times it was difficult to follow the vocalists. In particular, I could not understand as single word of the Pharaoh's in *Song of the King*.

But overall, *Joseph* is a fine, fun production, with plenty of good singing, dancing and humor. But be sure to bring your ear plugs for when the girls start to scream over Cassidy.