

A funny thing happened all right!

A FUNNY evening is just what one needs to make it less of a hard day's night—and the Nairobi City Players musical-comedy, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* goes a long way to meeting that requirement.

It's zany, even hilarious in parts and, in keeping with NCP's 20-year-old reputation at the Kenya National Theatre good entertainment.

The play had a charity premiere on Thursday night when the first-night audience quickly established who their favourites were. Glynn Davies giving a memorable and marathon performance as Pseudolus, the slave who hits on an idea that will give him his freedom from his Roman masters.

It appears simplicity itself, getting his master's love-smitten son (who's as innocent as his mother's closetting has made him to be) to meet and fall in love with forbidden love in the form of Philia, a lovely courtesan who unfortunately, already happens to have been sold to the highest bidder, a war-loving conqueror Captain Miles Gloriosus (Ken Latham).

But, to cut a long story short, there are other factors that plague Pseudolus' initial straight-forward plan, and, by the time it all sorts itself out, no one is quite who they were at the beginning—literally.

Keith Gristock also gives a tremendous performance as Hysterium, a finicky, effeminate servant in the house of Senex (the "dirty old man") played by Jack Moss father to Hero (Barry Lenox) the love-struck youth dominantly mothered by Domina (Marlene Docherty). Bryan Epsom also takes credit as Marcus Lycus, proprietor of a house of ill-repute from whose door troop some of the loveliest girls one would have wished to see in ancient Rome or on the Kenya National Theatre stage where the play is playing until November 20.

A Funny Thing may not be NCP's best musical, but under Benny Goodman's direction, it is still one of their good if not better, ones.

—MUGAMBI KARANJA