

SMOKE SIGNALS

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Look Homeward, Angel

A Review by Ken Wolfskill

Autobiographical works like *Look Homeward, Angel* are works of discovery rather than action: not much seems to happen, but a great deal is realized by the author, and the things that do happen are important for what they show about the nature of the world or life. In Ketti Frings' Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatization, Thomas Wolfe's novel is given a "plot" of the young author's breaking away from his smothering mother, and the discovery is, I think, that, while we may say life is meaningless and death is meaningless, we cannot believe in the nothingness of man; for man is too clever, to think man is of no consequence.

Mrs. Sandra Boyce and her Chowan Players shared that discovery in their November production. Perhaps the passion—especially the lust—was underplayed; perhaps the sickness in brother Ben was overplayed; but certainly the play's commitment to life's richness was presented fully. As Eugene Gant, Scott Canfield was convincingly naive, excited by life, and anxious as he looked out at the confusing world. The world has four major focuses for young Gant: one is new, blind, romantic love in Laura James (played quietly, unphysically by Tracy Fox); another is the wise but defeated older brother, Ben (Scot Tanner followed his directing well); but the most important focus for him is actually a blur, a confusion of romantic idealism and practical realism in his parents. The father (played richly and exuberantly by Michael Hewitt) wants deeply to laugh, weep, drink, and die—all appropriate, he thinks, to his miserable condition as a failed artist. The mother (played compellingly by Joyce Elliott) wants just as deeply to buy and sell for profit and praise; unlike her husband, who is inspired by the poets, she lives according to the spilled-milk clichés of practicality that earned the penny buy lost the soul. Having lost his brother and his girl, and realizing that his parents are merely self-centered in their advice and admonishments, our hero finally asserts himself, realizing at last that, while others around him make life rich, it is only he himself, by himself who will find his own fulfillment. His own fulfillment may be meaningless ultimately, but we know that his quest is not, because the passion—the loving, the hating, the communion, and the loneliness feels so rich.

Whitaker Library Prepares For Close of Semester

By Sarah Davis

As students prepare for exams, in addition to studying and purchasing the necessary equipment, each one needs to be sure to clear any obligations to Whitaker Library. All books must be returned by December 5, and any money owed to the library for any reason must be paid before the student is admitted to exams.

Approximately 6,000 books have been circulated to students this fall semester. These books have been checked out for 1-3 weeks and have been due on successive Wednesdays from September 25 to November 20 and on Thursday, December 5. If a student has failed to return a book on time, he has received overdue notices on successive Thursdays, and a fine of \$.05 per day has been charged for each book. If he paid the fine when he returned the book, the fine was cut in half. If he did not, a notice for the full fine was sent, and further notices sent as necessary.

On Monday, December 9, a list of all students who have obligations to the library will be sent to all faculty members. This list will include the names of those students who still have books out and the number of books and those students who still owe fines and the amount. Professors will speak to the students whose names appear on the list, and students will have until Wednesday, December 11, to return books and pay fines. After that time a second list is compiled, and the students names who appear on it must have clearance slips from the library before they have exams.

Should a book be lost, if it is still in print, the student must pay the current price of the book and a \$.00 processing fee. If the book is out of print, \$25.00 plus a \$5.00 processing fee will be charged for the book. In 1984 books purchased for the library cost an average of \$31.19 each.

All students will, therefore, wish to be sure they have cleared all obligations to Whitaker Library.

For the convenience of Chowan students, the library will be open ten extra hours during exams.

Exam schedule for Whitaker Library:

Friday, December 13

7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 14

7:30 a.m.-12:00 Noon

Sunday, December 15

2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Monday, December 16 through Wednesday, December 18

7:30 a.m.-5:00p.m., 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 19

7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Life's richness is further suggested in the supporting roles—the sensual and receptive earth-mother, "Fatty" Pert (Lynn Whitehurst); the truly maternal and the real practical force in the Gant household, sister Helen (Kaytee Bell); the cold con- niver, Will Pentland (James McDonald); the dull brother-in-law (Greg Granger) and adventurous brother (Bill Eckstein); a crowd of boarders, images of nosy, lusty, questing humanity (Ricky Killian, Betty Batchelor, Patrick Rudolph, Caroline Stephenson); and the wise doctor (Hargus Taylor) who voices the play's wisdom ("Try not to care too much" was an important impossibility to Wolfe and to many of his generation, especially Ernest Hemingway and Thornton Wilder).

With the artistic help of Kaytee Bell, Mrs. Boyce created an impressive set that provided a solid backdrop to the human drama and a clever stage trick that allowed us to see into private chambers of the boarding house. Not only does the device seem clever: it seems to add a dimension to Wolfe's/Frings' attempt to portray the inside and outside of existence.

Clearly, a lot of earnest effort went into this production, and the result, I feel, was one of the most provocative presentations from the Chowan Players.



"Got to sit down!!" W.O. Gant played by Michael Hewitt, Hugh Barton (right) Greg Granger, Helen Barton, Kaytee Bell, and Dr. Maquire played by Chaplain Taylor.



"Eugene, stand up, show people that you are somebody" scolds Eliza. (Played by Dr. Joyce Elliott). Eugene is played by Scot Canfield.



"K-K-K-Katie" strums Jake Clatt, played by Ricky Killian and Mill Brown, Caroline Stephenson.



"Don't worry Mrs. Gant, he's just passed out." Hugh Barton (Greg Granger), W.O. Gant (Michael Hewitt) and Dr. Maquire (Chaplain Taylor).



Brother talk. Ben Gant played by Scot Tanner and Eugene (Scott Canfield).