

'Deathtrap' is a play filled with surprising plot twists

The Raleigh Little Theatre production of Ira Levin's *Deathtrap* is one of life's little contradictions. This production does not develop thoroughly, but for those who have never seen *Deathtrap*, is not a play to miss.

Deathtrap is both funny and suspenseful. The story begins with Sidney Bruhl, a post-famous playwright, who plots with his wife, Myra, to steal a promising new play from naive, unknown playwright Clifford Anderson. But, *Deathtrap* is the play Anderson wrote, and there are twists at every unforeseeable corner.

John T. Hall gives an admirable performance as Bruhl, adding depth by giving little performance asides to Bruhl's character. Hall draws the audience into the play. He makes Bruhl almost forgivable in the overwhelming greed which leads him to commit some horrendous acts.

Hall's personal life is as multifaceted as is the character he develops. He received his master's degree in theatre and TV production from the University of Maryland. He then earned a law degree from UNC. Now a lawyer in Raleigh, Hall taught theatre for 10 years at the University of Baltimore. He spent six years as a professional actor and has directed over 35 productions.

Lynne Anchors-Hurder does little more than deliver lines as Myra Bruhl. Although her role could have been much further developed — as it was by Dyan Cannon in the film version, for example — Anchors-Hurder merely plays straight man to Hall.

Another adequate but underdeveloped performance comes from Bill Vann as Clifford Anderson, the young, aspiring playwright.

Arlaine Rockey

Review

For some reason the director of *Deathtrap*, Haskell Fitz-Simons, has decided to mask over the homosexual relationship between Anderson and Bruhl which is crucial to an understanding of the play. Anderson and Bruhl react to each other more like football players than lovers.

Marion Fitz-Simons, the director's mother, steals the show as Helga Ten Dorp, the wacky neighbor who is an internationally known psychic famous for cracking police murder cases. A well known professional actress in North Carolina, Fitz-Simons spent many years with *Unto These Hills* and *The Lost Colony*. She also performed with the Carolina Playmakers, forerunners of the PlayMakers Repertory Company.

Peter Poor plays Porter Milgrim, an outsider who becomes involved in the murder mystery.

Deathtrap played for years on Broadway and in London. Levin mixes intelligent wit, slapstick comedy and murder mystery to create a thoroughly enjoyable play.

Deathtrap will be performed by the Raleigh Little Theatre at 301 Pogue St. in Raleigh through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. Student tickets are \$3 for the matinee, \$4 on weeknights and \$5 on Friday and Saturday. For reservations or information, call 821-3111 between noon and 6 p.m.

Filmgoers fishing for fun should catch 'Splash'

Feeling that love has passed him by, Allen Bauer takes a cab from New York City to Cape Cod to get away from his floundering produce business and his philandering brother, Freddie.

A boating accident almost puts Allen out of his misery when he is miraculously rescued by a beautiful naked girl who kisses him passionately before splashing out of his life and back into the ocean.

Sound like the plot's all washed up? Not on your life, because *Splash* is the best comedy catch to come along in quite a while. It's a story about a nice young man and the mermaid next door, and it never falls flat.

A true blend of romance and comedy, *Splash* really comes alive when the mermaid, who can only sprout legs for one week before she must return to the ocean or leave it forever, decides to pursue her true love to the Big Apple.

Madison, who names herself after the avenue because her real name is a real scream, takes on Manhattan and quickly catches on to human lingo by watching TV.

Danger stalks the entranced lovers, however, in the form of a bumbling scientist, Dr. Walter Kornbluth, who's on Madison's tail, suspecting that a squirt of water will zap her legs and his name into the history books.

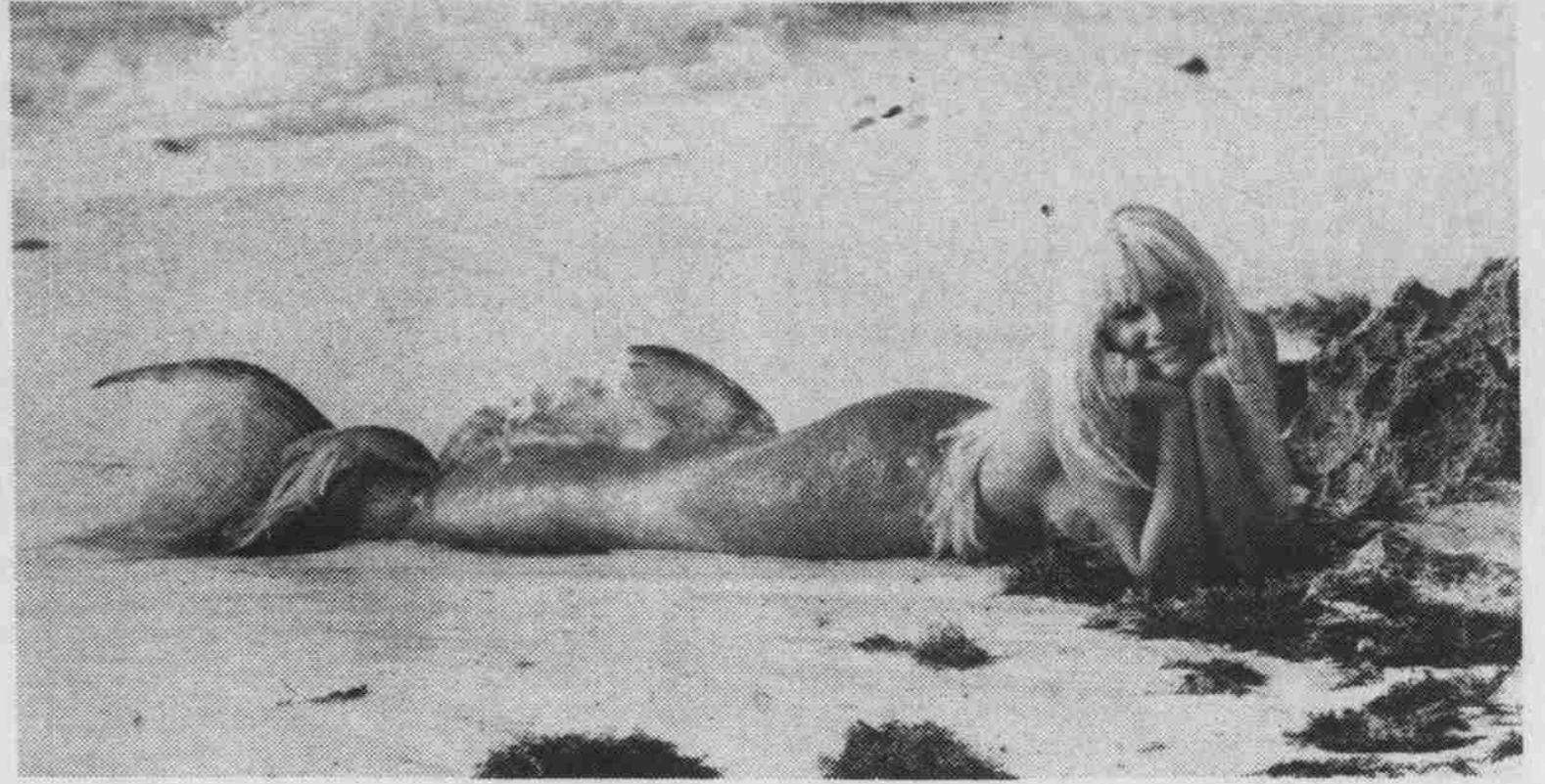
The fairy-tale charm of *Splash* has a lot to do with Tom Hanks and Daryl Hannah, who play the lovestruck twosome.

Hannah, whose previous roles include the acrobatic replicant in *Blade Runner* and the romantic lead in *Reckless*, shows loads of talent and potential in her first comedy role. Her wonder at the sites of New York City is a marvelous display of innocence personified.

Hannah, who had a childhood fascination with mermaids, literally immersed herself in her part, doing all of her own underwater work and eventually swimming 120 feet in her tail costume while holding her breath.

Hanks, best remembered for his starring role in TV's *Bosom Buddies*, makes waves of his own in *Splash*.

As Allen, Hanks is a slyly comedic, all-American boy. Like a young Jack Lemmon, Hanks can and does change from serious and poignant to drunk and goofy to



Daryl Hannah may be washed up in 'Splash,' but the movie is funny as a school of dolphins

romantic and vulnerable, not to mention the scenes he must act underwater.

Second City Television alumni John Candy and Eugene Levy also get their feet wet in *Splash* with their first really good movie roles.

Just watching Candy is funny, but give him some good comedy and stand back. As the lecherous Freddie Bauer, who smokes while he plays racquetball — among other things, Candy is a jewel. He is most affecting, though, when he advises his brother not to forsake his mermaid love, admonishing him that "nobody said love's perfect."

As the embittered scientist who eventually suffers an attack of conscience, Levy has a part that could be the least promising of the movie, but he makes the best of this low-life comedy part.

Veteran actress Dody Goodman has a delightful cameo role as the Bauers' ditsy secretary, and Kornbluth's moronic assistants, played by David Knell and Jeff Doucette, are gems of bit character parts.

But the real triumph of *Splash* belongs to director Ron Howard, who pulls off this improbable fantasy with the

skill of an old-timer.

Although a generation of TV viewers may think of Howard only as Opie Taylor and/or Richie Cunningham, they are going to have to revise their opinion to include Howard as the successful comedy director.

Howard just turned 30, but his career spans 27 years, and since the surprise success of his 1977 directorial debut in *Grand Theft Auto*, his ambition has been directing. His first major studio effort, *Night Shift*, fared well at the box office and *Splash* seems destined to do even better.

The pacing and the visual effects in *Splash* are top-notch, and mixed in with the comedy is a surprising flair for depicting a sensual love story.

Added to this is a wonderfully witty, sometimes satiric screenplay by Lowell Ganz, Babaloo Mandel and Bruce Jay Friedman and the work of producer Brian Grazer, who conceived the film's premise.

Fantasy and magic, mixed with warm emotions, is a rare treat to find in film nowadays, and it is these qualities that make *Splash* a film moviegoers fall for — hook, line and sinker.

GRAND OPENING

The Last Resort

Restaurant & Bar

Prime Rib, Sauteed Seafood, Lobster Tails, Lamb Chops, Chicken and Veal, plus a delightful Sunday Brunch 10:30-2:00. Serving dinner nightly from 6:00 pm, reservations suggested. Happy Hour 4:30-6:30. ABC Permits and extensive wine list.

Your First Choice is The Last Resort

942-5757
157 East Rosemary St. Chapel Hill

\$15⁰⁰ to \$25⁰⁰

SAVINGS

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE SPECIAL SAVINGS AT:

DATE: **April 5** TIME: **9-4**

PLACE: **STUDENT STORES**

HERFF JONES
Division of Carnation Company

Miller High Life

The Champagne of Beers

The Best of the Day