

PlayMakers: A season of love in drama

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Tar Heel Staff Writer

PlayMakers Repertory Company at UNC will present six plays during the 1984-85 season beginning in mid-October.

"The overriding theme is love and romance," said Gregory Boyd, artistic director of PlayMakers. "The plays provide an exploration into the different relationships between men and women."

The productions scheduled for PlayMakers ninth professional season include "Ring Around the Moon" by Jean Anouilh, "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder, "Measure for Measure" by William Shakespeare, "Cloud 9" by Caryl Churchill, "Curse of the Starving Class" by Sam Sheppard and "Cyrano De Bergerac" by Edmund Rostand.

As a prelude to the season, PlayMakers will also present "The Last Song of John Proffitt" by Tommy Thompson from mid-September until mid-October.

"Ring Around the Moon" is a fable about twin brothers discovering the perplexities and intricacies of love. Shy and sensitive Frederic is in love with a hussy who is in love with Frederic's twin, Hugo. To save Frederic from an unhappy marriage, Hugo brings a beautiful dancer to a ball to distract him. Masquerading as a mysterious personage, she is a total success, both destroying the

cynical romances and falling in love herself. Jean Anouilh is a French playwright from the post-World War II generation.

Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama "Our Town" will open in mid-November. This American classic depicts the humor, simple beauty and pathos of life in Grovers Corner, New Hampshire, set against a background of centuries of time, social history and religious beliefs. As children, George Gibbs and Emily Webb are playmates who gradually grow to love each other. Emily's subsequent death reveals a peace that the living can never understand.

In February, PlayMakers will present its second annual PlayFest, featuring three productions: "Measure for Measure," "Cloud 9" and "Curse of the Starving Class" which will be performed on a rotating basis.

The timeless love story "Measure for Measure," first performed in 1604, is Shakespeare's darkest comedy, pitting the wiles of love and desire against the laws of man and society.

In "Cloud 9," British playwright Caryl Churchill destroys the laws of society concerning the wiles of love. The play begins in 1880 Victorian Africa as a parody of social, sexual, gender, and racial roles. Men play women, women play men, blacks play whites, whites play blacks and adults play children. Act II shifts to London 1980, with the actors

switching roles and the lovers switching partners. "Cloud 9" is recommended for mature audiences, according to Boyd.

Another play recommended for mature audiences is "Curse of the Starving Class" by Sam Shepard. The play is a scathing examination of the American Dream where an archetypal family living in a farmhouse in the American West have everything they need and nothing they want. The action bursts with changes and reversals as each family member pursues a diminished dream thwarted by the illusion of fulfillment.

The season will conclude with the French classic "Cyrano De Bergerac" in which Edmund Rostand creates a play of romance and adventure. Cyrano is a lover, poet and master swordsman with the most famous nose in the history of drama.

The season prelude one-man show "The Last Song of John Proffitt" by Tommy Thompson narrates the tale of a fictional friend of Dan Emmet, the American minstrel who wrote "Dixie." Thompson, a member of the Red Clay Ramblers, is the co-author of the musical "Life on the Mississippi," which was presented by PlayMakers in 1982.

Due to the success of last year's season, PlayMakers is offering longer runs and a wider arrangement of performances for the 1984-85 season. Each production

will be performed for two-and-a-half weeks. According to Robert Tolan, production director of PlayMakers, there will be 15 regular performances of each play this season compared to 11 last season. "We are adding performances to the run of each show to accommodate the demand for seats," Tolan said.

To promote the 1984-85 season

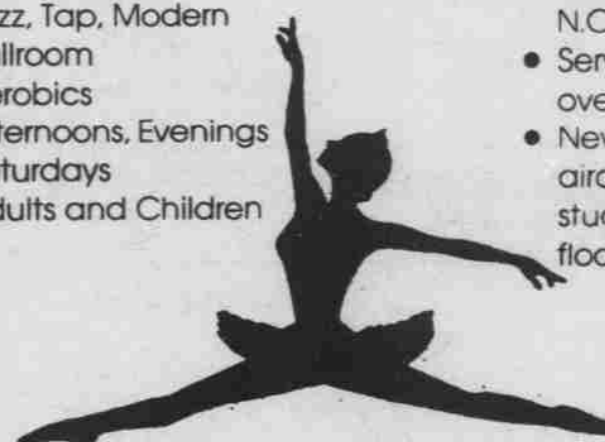
PlayMakers has hired SRO, a telemarketing firm out of Atlanta. According to Susan Gazarek, a representative from SRO, the firm has launched a subscription campaign by calling local Raleigh, Durham and Research Triangle Park residents. "I feel like PlayMakers deserves the recognition and growth we can provide," Gazarek said.

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