

Play 'Three Guys Naked' mixes humor, bitterness

Anyone who has ever wanted to say "I was there when..." while others turn green with envy had better get on the phone and call the PlayMakers Repertory Company today.

Three Guys Naked From the Waist Down, a musical PRC is presenting in its pre-off-Broadway tryout, opened to the kind of audience response that indicates a sure-fire sell-out hit in the making.

Uniquely fresh and modern, *Three Guys* wraps a contemporary score around expressions of both humor and bitterness in the story of three stand-up comics and their rise to a fame they can't shake even when they want to.

Jeff Grove

Review

Ted Klauserman, an itinerant emcee making the rounds of New York City comedy clubs, crosses paths with tough-guy comic Phil Kunin and the bizarre, fragile Kenny Brewster.

The trio's elevation to greatness comes quickly, and the bulk of the musical deals with the consequences of this sudden fame.

On paper, Ted seems to be the show's centerpiece. In practice, John Kassir's performance as Kenny frequently steals the spotlight.

Kassir has a wider range of vocal effects than the entire BBC Sound Effects Library — a range he demonstrates with a monologue in which he single-handedly replicates both a Godzilla film and an episode of *Star Trek*, to the audience's convulsed delight. Surprisingly — his previous experience having come primarily in comedy — Kassir also demonstrates a sure feel for his more poignant, emotional scenes.

Jerry Colker swaggers with macho assurance through the part of Phil, betraying anxiety as his thoughts turn increasingly to his pregnant girlfriend. The clash of these emotions builds a strong character that buries the "dumb jock" stereotype.

As Ted, Scott Bakula relies on a glib surface and his character's skill for astute management to bulldoze Kenny and Phil to the top with him. His final scene is all the more shattering a picture of disillusionment for his early cockiness.

Three Guys belongs in textbooks on how to write music for the theatre. In his debut as a composer, Michael Rupert has constructed tunes that bounce along with the plot, nowhere better exemplified than in "Promise of Greatness" and "Don't Wanna Be No Superstar," which serve as recurrent motifs.

Rupert also writes sly, pointed humorous numbers well. Phil's "Angry Guy/Lovely Day" wins the audience early. The title song bristles with fun, and Don Bondi's choreography, coupled with Ken Billington's extravagant lighting and Thomas McKinley's ingenious costumes, give it even more zip.

When there is time to relax without derailing the plot, Rupert's melodies soar into ballads that make most Top-40 material seem infantile by comparison. Among Rupert's best creations here are "Dreams of Heaven," portraying Kenny's shyness as well as his loneliness, "A Father Now," in which

Phil acknowledges the uncertainties of parenthood, and "I Don't Believe in Heroes Anymore," Ted's powerful finale.

In addition to playing Phil, Colker wrote the script and lyrics for *Three Guys*. His lyrics maintain their sophistication without playing convoluted word games, a trap to which many lyricists fall prey. The script, however, is a start-and-go affair. Some scenes seem to exist merely to connect songs; others truly come alive. The choice to set much of the text as a sort of rap, complete with percussion accompaniment, is especially inspired.

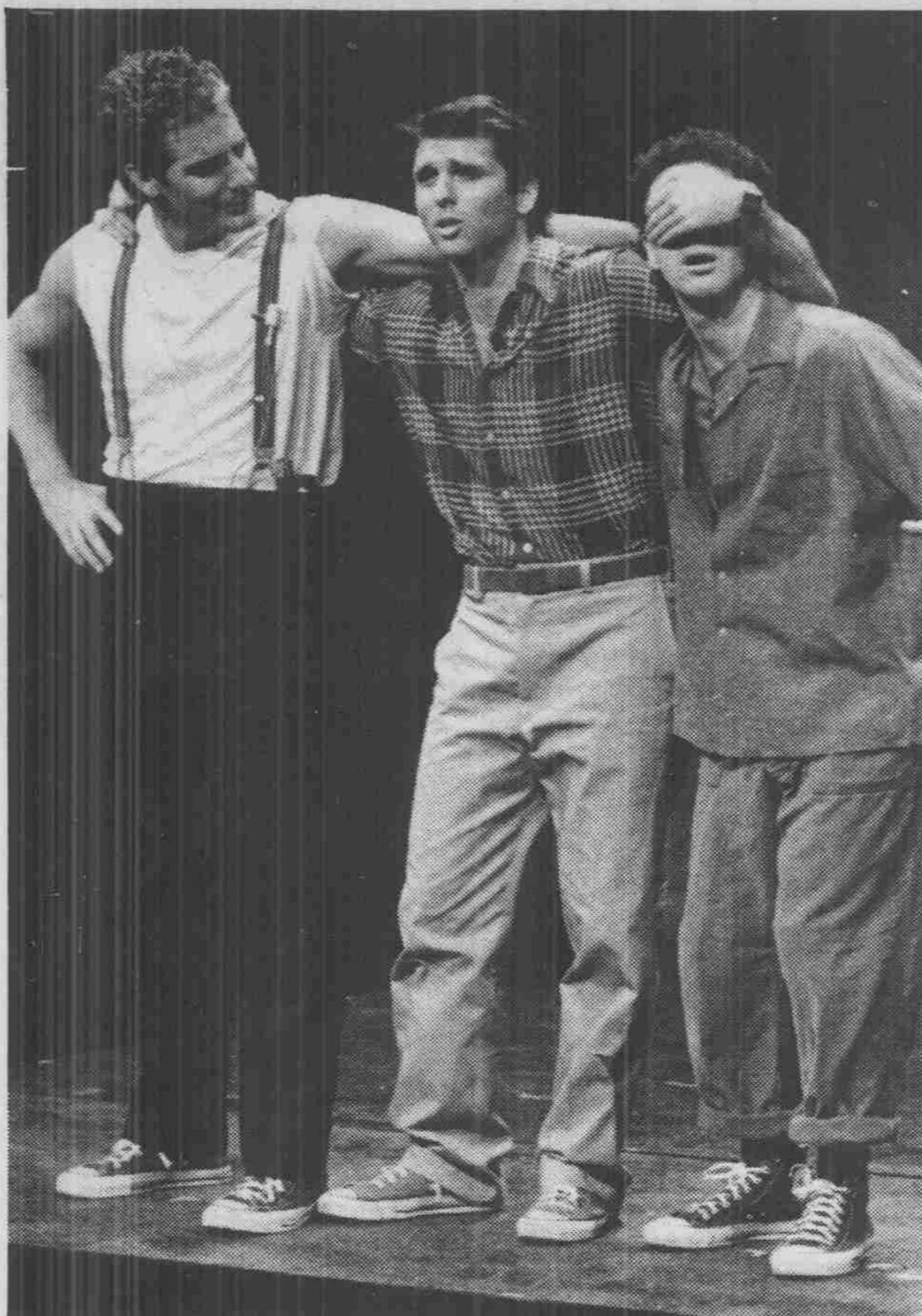
Andrew Cadiff's direction neatly exploits Clarke Dunham's set, which is by turns as severe as a desert and glittery as an act in Vegas.

Opening night ran a little slowly because of unresolved technical difficulties, but the play itself undeniably drags at times, too. A sequence portraying the characters' world tour lasts too long and has too little variety to keep the audience's attention. Sometimes, however, the slow pace is intentional; Ted and Phil's opening monologues, for example, seem a little stiff and forced, but that paves the way for Kenny's dazzling routine to prove that he is the real genius among the three.

One truly annoying technical hitch on opening night was an incessant buzzing noise in the sound system. But the 50-megaton energy of the performers, backed up by musical director Henry Aronson and his energetic four-man band, overcame these obstacles to put the audience on its feet at the end of the show.

Three Guys is a biting, funny musical that Chapel Hillians will talk about for years. PRC has even set up a special "hotline" in anticipation of ticket demand. And people who don't use the number soon will be left in the cold, contenting themselves merely with the inevitable original cast album of the show.

Three Guys Naked From the Waist Down will be performed Tuesday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m. through Sept. 23 in the Paul Green Theatre. Call 962-8755 for ticket information.



Scott Bakula, Jerry Colker and John Kassir star in new PRC play

Alcohol from page 1

year here I have treated three students who could have easily died because of alcohol. That's a reality."

In light of all this, SHSS offers these suggestions to maintain control if you are going to drink:

- Drink only when you're feeling well.
- Eat before and while drinking.
- Sip drinks slowly.
- Dilute drinks
- Take a break between drinks.

Sometimes students end up being the best teachers.



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Sat., Oct. 6, 10:00 AM — 7:30 PM (Duke)

Followed by a community-wide Break-the-Fast

The student-run egalitarian services are held at Baldwin Auditorium, on the East Campus of Duke University. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur EVENING services will also be held this year at Gerrard Hall on the U.N.C.-C.H. campus. Anyone planning to attend the High Holiday Services must pick up their tickets in advance at the Hillel office. Tickets are free to all students. The Hillel office is open 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday through Friday and is located at 210 W. Cameron Avenue, behind Granville Towers. Tickets will not be given out after 12 noon on September 26. Transportation is available. For more information, call 942-4057.

Beach

from page 1

updated the situation yesterday. "There was quite a bit of damage. I imagine about \$5 million." Most of the injuries to homes will have to be paid by insurance companies, while the towns' major problems will be repairing eroded streets and battered utilities, he said.

We were lucky — our house had received only as much damage as most others. Tree branches and green leaves stood at least two inches deep everywhere in the county, but considering the number of trunks which came through people's roofs, there was little complaining.

In fact, there seemed to be only one common gripe: "the darn news media." Early Thursday morning, it was "somehow" reported that Southport had been leveled and half of the Brunswick Nuclear Reactor was missing — a feat that would have left little of that part of N.C.

"My daughter was in tears when she finally got through to us on the phone," said Dorothy Piper, of 305 Mercer St.

In reality, only four homes were devastated beyond repair, mainly because of damage caused by water and rain. Houses up and down the oceanfront are missing shingles and plywood, while most homes were left with 3 inches of foliage fallout.

Before Diana had made her round-

house sweep down the coast, many locals were refusing to believe, but not refusing to leave.

"Hell, ain't no hurricane coming to Long Beach," a friend's dad remarked, "can't get no damn permit."

Dorothy and her husband, Peter, had been the last ones over the bridge to an evacuation shelter Tuesday, they said. But after spending the night in the gym of a county school, when they heard of the hurricane's path, they decided their house would be just as safe Wednesday night.

"It was raining sheets of rain," and you could see whitecaps on the 4 inches of water in the street, Peter Piper said. But the Pipers went to sleep, forgetting about the storm. "To me this was nothing like some blizzards we've been through (in Poland, Ohio)," he said, "knowing you're going to be stuck for two or three weeks."

But most people who could leave, did, Thomas said. "We had 98 percent evacuation on Tuesday. I think everyone realizes that we were extremely fortunate — extremely fortunate," Thomas said.

Hurricane Diana had blown through here twice since my last visit, but it had not been a storm of "epic" proportions and — more importantly — it had not been a killer.

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