

Lab Theater to present comedies

By JIM GILES
Staff Writer

UNC Lab Theatre is gearing up for another production. This weekend, the Lab will present a double bill of original comedies, *The Idiot Box* and *Altered Mates*.

The Idiot Box is an ensemble piece with eight cast members. Written and directed by Glenn Gillen, the play's main character is Phoebe, a television addict who employs the medium as a means of escape. The other cast members represent different TV programs and commercials as Phoebe switches the channels. Gillen said that the script of the play was originally written as an English assignment, but has turned out to be an entertaining mini-play.

Altered Mates is a slightly different kind of comedy in a style reminiscent of Second City TV. The idea for *Mates* was conceived by the show's director,

Bob Boster. It is improvisational theatre; there is no script, although the order of various sketches has been pre-established.

The play's theme is the sexual attitudes of people in present-day Chapel Hill. Boster said that while ordinarily, people are uncomfortable watching something that is so frank and open about sex, their attitudes are different if they are laughing about it.

The skits that comprise *Mates* deal with a variety of sexual problems. "We have found that there is much humor to be found in the complex sexual relationships between people," explained Boster. Participants in the play call it fresh, unique, and even "quick and dirty."

The Idiot Box and *Altered Mates* will be performed by the UNC Lab Theatre at 4 and 8 p.m. in 06 Graham Memorial Hall.

Regional troupe to perform

By ELIZABETH ELLEN
Arts Editor

A regional ballet company with impressive reviews and big plans for the future, the Louisville Ballet will perform Sunday in Memorial Hall as the Triangle Dance Guild's season opener. For its first Chapel Hill appearance, the company will present a program demonstrating a versatility which the Ballet's artistic director Alun Jones calls one of its major strengths.

Allegro Brillante, a contemporary ballet choreographed by the American innovator George Balanchine, will open the program. Set to Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 3*, the piece is "technically very difficult but enjoyable," according to Jones.

The next work, *Billy the Kid*, is a marked contrast to *Allegro*. Jones said this version of the old legend was the first fully American ballet, choreographed by Eugene Loring to the music of Aaron Copeland. "Billy has become a classic of its kind," said Jones. "It's a wonderful work."

The last piece is the brand new collection of dances known as *The Judy Dances*. Set to eight Judy Garland songs, the dances are "jazzy and lighthearted," according to Jones. Period costumes from the 1920s and '30s add to the nostalgic feel of the work.

The Louisville Ballet was founded in 1952 as a civic ballet. It has grown to be a nationally recognized professional company and has been named the State Ballet of Kentucky. One of the highlights of the company's history was a two-season collaboration with Mikhail Barishnikov.

Jones' plans for the company's future include more touring and enlarging the company's membership. "We have a very large repertoire," he added. "I would like to expand it."

The Louisville Ballet will perform Sunday at 8 p.m. in Memorial Hall. Call 962-1449 for ticket information.

Williams' plays worth the ticket

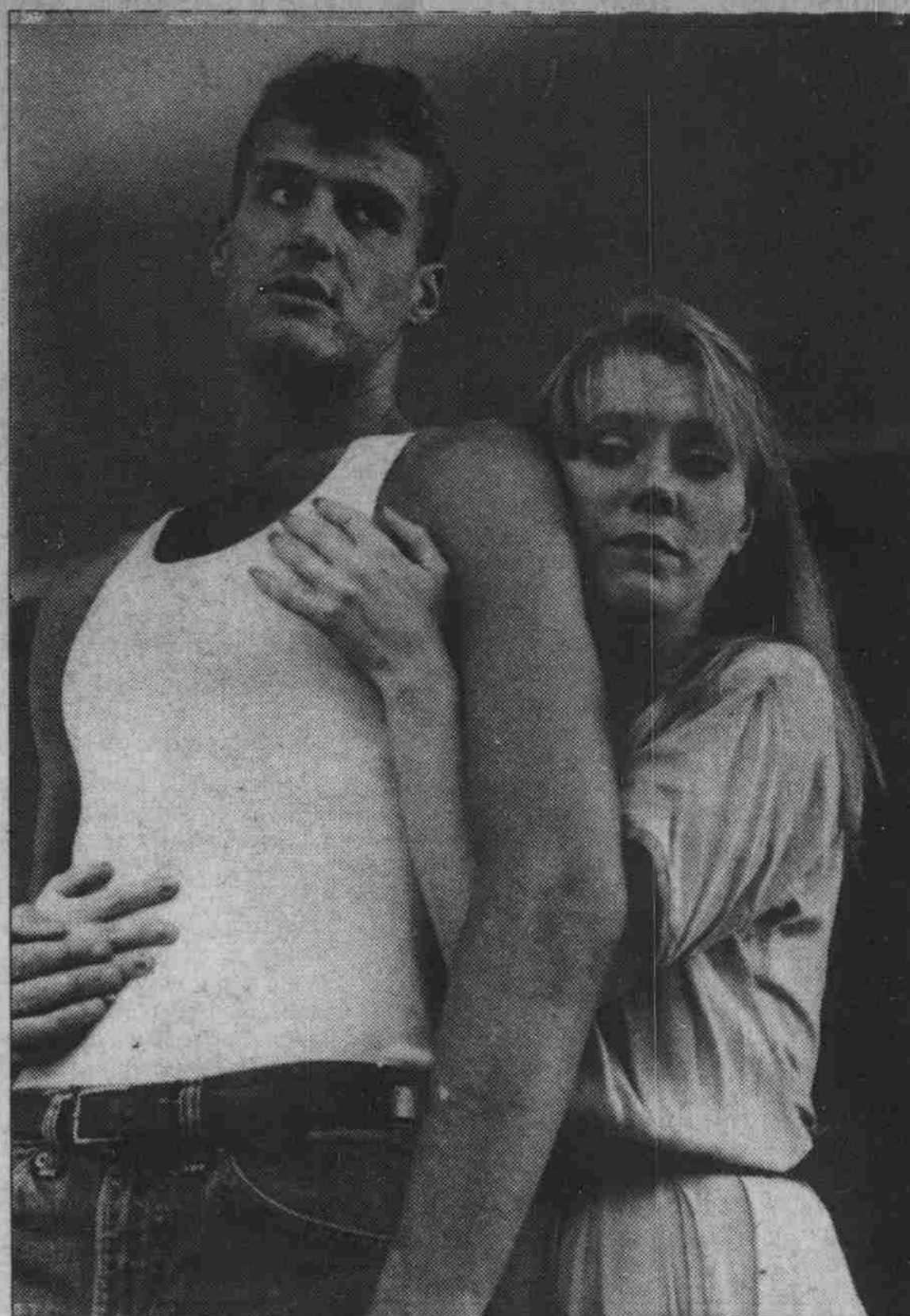
By GARRET WEYR
Staff Writer

"An Evening of Tennessee Williams," a collection of three one-act plays presented by the department of dramatic art, is probably the best theatre to be seen right now in the Triangle area. The directing is sure and deft, the acting is outstanding, and the plays are virtually flawless and mesmerizing.

This Property is Condemned is basically a dialogue between a boy and a girl who meet at a railroad track. The set for this play, a life-size broken track, is particularly spectacular. The girl, played shinningly by Margaret Jemison, wears her dead sister's old clothes and dreams of dating the same sister's old beau. She is aware of the dichotomy between life and movies (her sister had the same disease as Camille but did not die like Greta Garbo), but at the same time is blissfully unaware of the dichotomy between her own reality and her imagination. The boy serves basically to prod the girl on in her stories, but Kenn Russell brings lovely understatement to the part.

The Case of the Crushed Petunias leaves Williams' South and takes place in Primarproper, Mass. The play is a lightweight story of an old maid, played by Tania Drummond, who is released from New England staidness by a strange young man, played with high energy by Reed Edward Diamond, who says things like "Live, just live." The staging in this play is very clever and sharp, but the play itself is not as strong as the two between which it is sandwiched.

In *27 Wagons Full of Cotton* can be seen elements foreshadowing Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Diana Osberg, who plays the heroine Flora Meighan, is the star of the evening with no false moments. Flora is a fragile, silly southern belle with a leaning toward migraines and a penchant for Coca-Cola. Her husband Jake, played by Jim Shores, pushes her around and calls her names. He comes into a large piece of business (winning the 27 wagons full of cotton of the title) because of a mysterious fire at Silva Viccaro's farm. It is Flora who is left to deal with the wrathful and suspicious Viccaro, played by the ever stiff and wooden Fetzer Mills. What Viccaro actually does to her is never seen, but the look on Flora's face when she returns to the porch after going into the house speaks volumes.



Diana Osberg and Jim Shores will appear in "27 Wagon Loads of Cotton"

theatre

The costumes by Rosemary Howard are perfect, and the lighting by Alan Reihl is inventive. The plays will be performed through Oct. 13. If the full house on opening night is any indication, tickets may be hard to come by for the remaining performances. But

rushing to get them is well worth the effort.

Because of an overwhelming demand for tickets to the department of dramatic art production of "An Evening of Tennessee Williams," an encore performance has been added. This additional performance will be Sun., Oct. 13, at 7 p.m. in PlayMakers Theatre. Call 962-1121 for ticket information.

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