

This thriller is all in fun

Deathtrap

Thursday, Feb. 1 through Sunday March 3
8 p.m. nightly
3 p.m. Sunday matinees

Carrboro ArtsCenter
929-ARTS

Tickets: \$7 public, \$5.50 Friends

GREG MILLER

Theater

me to reveal much about the plot. But since many people did see the movie of the same name, which was based on this play, I will say this: they tampered needlessly with Levin's work.

The movie was fun, though. Since the story has a definite British whodunit feel, Michael Caine was perfect as Sidney Bruhl, the forgotten playwright ("Nothing recedes like success"), and Christopher Reeve was surprisingly believable as Clifford Anderson, the aspiring playwright who apparently strikes gold with his first effort. Surprising only because we know him so well as the "man of steel." But if you have seen the movie, be prepared for some fresh surprises.

The rule seems to be that I can tell you the beginning, but not the middle or the end, so here goes. Sidney Bruhl is a once-prominent playwright down on his luck, 18 years down on his luck and so down on his luck that he has stooped to giving college seminars and living off his rich wife's money.

The play opens with Sidney and his wife Myra in his Connecticut

home. He has just finished reading a carbon copy of a play sent to him by a student who attended a recent seminar he gave. As mentioned in the above paragraph, it is highly commercial. Sidney calls Clifford, the young playwright, and invites him down to talk about his work. Clifford accepts the invitation from his mentor and promises to bring the original so that Sidney will not have to strain his old eyes reading the carbon. We then find out that these are the only copies and no one else has read it or knows he has been working on it.

You can see where this is going. Sidney needs a success and wants one so badly that he begins entertaining the possibility of murder, much to his wife's — and her bad heart's — chagrin. Not a bad beginning, but be prepared. Surprise is definitely the rule in this play. The plot twists and doubles back on itself endlessly. In fact, the end is so contrived as to appear mockingly weak. But that is what it should be.

"Deathtrap" has very little depth, but it doesn't need it or, for that matter, want it. It is, quite literally, a farce of itself, its genre, its author and even its audience. It seems to write itself as it goes. I'm looking forward to the ride.

Tonight the ArtsCenter opens Ira Levin's comic thriller, *Deathtrap*. "... two acts, one set, five characters, a juicy murder in Act I, unexpected developments in Act II, sound construction, good dialogue, laughs in the right places, highly commercial." In the first moment of the play, Ira Levin tells us, fairly accurately, his own summary of his work.

Levin is best known for several stories that have been turned into movies. These stories include, in addition to this play: "Rosemary's Baby," "The Boys From Brazil," "A Kiss Before Dying" and "The Stepford Wives."

A thriller, by definition, is difficult to write because the story comes more from surprise than from anywhere else, so it is ethically taboo for



The UNC Jazz Band performs in Great Hall Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. with other area collegiate bands. DTH/Sarah King

Even their dress rehearsals dazzle

By Layton Croft
Assistant Editor

Thank heaven for whims! My friend Jimmy dragged me down to the women's gym at Woolen last Sunday night and I was thoroughly moved by a group of dancers. Until then, I knew little and cared less for modern dance, or neo-dance for that matter. Thank heaven for UNC Modernextension, a club sport that should also be classified a romance, tear-jerker and gut-wrencher.

The troupe is run entirely by students and has two faculty advisors, Killian Manning and Marian Turner. The men and women who make up Modernextension do it all: the choreography, the music selection and ed-

iting, the organization and of course the dance, and they do it right.

Sunday's concert was an informal 'dress rehearsal' for the group's concerts in Memorial Auditorium April 20 and 21. I had never been to a modern dance performance and its power encompasses the realm of emotion in art and the art of emotion.

The last of the six pieces performed was called "Time-Piece." No one breathed — even the dancers. Absolute brilliance in choreography to music by Phillip Glass from Akhnaten gilded this piece with mystery. Gentry Gibson and Michele Grand were outstanding, gracing every move with performed delicacy but motivated by intense raw emotion, like

kindled lava.

"Time-Piece" will be performed at Wake Forest University later in the spring as a part of a national competition.

The group prefaced Sunday's concert with a warning that the dancing may not be dazzling and the choreography was still in primitive stages. They said the Memorial Hall shows would include lighting, costumes, better sound and polished routines.

But if those artists/athletes/poets of emotion could move an indifferent ignoramus like myself to modern dance with a shabby 45-minute 'dress rehearsal,' then there is no doubt they will move mountains of souls come April!

ARTS BRIEFS

ART

The Ackland Art Museum has been busy acquiring new works even during its three-year refurbishment. The exhibition, "Recent Acquisitions: Prints and Drawings," will feature donor gifts and museum purchases since it closed for renovations in 1986. Works on display date from the 16th to late 20th centuries and include prints by Edouard Manet, Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso, and drawings by Rosa Bonheur and Milton Avery. The display highlights the direction the Ackland's collection of drawings has taken in the last five years. Also featured in the display are an Andy Warhol color lithograph, "Liz," which depicts Elizabeth Taylor and cartoonist Honore Daumier's 19th-century lithograph of a seance run amuck. The exhibition will run through April 7, and admission is free.

Works by Chapel Hill artist Glenn Arndt are on display in the Carolina Union Art Gallery through March 8. The exhibit, "Terra Incognita," features digitized photographs, computer-generated graphics and text. The artist said the two sections of the display have highly structured and political themes. The first section consists of narrated pictures and the second is a visual commentary on plant and environmental mutation.

BALLET

The Chapel Hill Ballet Company with guest artists Tyler Walters and Katie Wakeford, present *Cinderella*, the classic fairy tale ballet at 8 p.m. on March 23 and at 3 p.m. on March 24 at Chapel Hill High School. Tickets are available at the door and at Dance Design, Rams Plaza Chapel Hill. For more information call 942-2131.

MUSIC

Pianist Michael Zenge will present a concert of the "Music of Mozart, Kirchner, Chopin and Brahms," on Sunday, Feb. 24 at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall Auditorium. The program will feature four major works for the piano, including the first regional performance of Leon Kircher's "Five Pieces for the Piano." Originally conceived, published and performed as a cycle of songs to texts by Emily Dickinson,

Kircher reworked the material into a suite for the solo piano.

The UNC Symphony Orchestra will present the Department of music's annual "Scholarship Benefit Concert" on Tuesday, Feb. 26 at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall Auditorium. Directed by Tonu Kalam, featured artists are the winners of the annual UNC Concerto Competition. The performing students are: Angelo Gomes, cello; Dawn Adamiec, flute; Virginia Green, soprano; Ruth Ann Woodley, piano and Joel Fox, baritone. Concertos by Beethoven and Haydn are two of the works highlighted.

The New Music Ensemble of UNC-CH will present the Spring 1991 Concert of The Composer-Concert-Series on Thursday, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall auditorium. The concert will feature the work of three major American composers and the world premiere work of by Dalton Winslow, who is just beginning his professional career. The four compositions are written for instrumental ensembles ranging from a trio to a chamber orchestra of 11 players.

For more information on the above listings call 962-BACH.

Remember the Jazz Festival this weekend. Student Jazz performance in the Cabaret at 8 p.m. on Feb. 21. Dial & Oatts in Memorial Hall at 8 p.m. on Feb. 22. Ahmad Jamal in Memorial Hall at 8 p.m. on Feb. 23. and on Feb. 24 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Great Hall, college bands will entertain. Later at 8 p.m. Don Cherry will be in Memorial Hall. Don't miss a great weekend of jazz.

THEATRE

Lab Theatre presents *On Tidy Endings* directed by Allison Herring and Kim Kessler. The play revolves around the confrontation between the ex-wife and the lover of a man who just died from AIDS. The play is one of the first to deal with the aftermath of AIDS instead of the discovery of the disease. Playwright Harvey Fierstein takes a look at the friends of the deceased picking up the pieces and coming to terms with each other and the truth. Performances are held in the bottom of Graham Memorial at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Sunday and Monday, and on Tuesday at 5 p.m. Admission is free. Good things come out of the Lab Theatre. Check it out.

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