

*Dudley*

## Peer Gynt

It's not the least bit unusual for the Highland Players to conclude a season with the year's most profound production. Two years ago it was "Waiting for Godot", an exercise in saving promising tomorrows and accumulating empty yesterdays. Last year's season ended with a study of the meaning of life and death -- Shakespeare's "Hamlet". Perhaps we are more apt to think deeply and appreciate such drama now rather than earlier in the year; such is difficult to judge.

But the fact remains that the Highland Players are -- or were, since it's been several days since the show closed -- back in the limelight, with the most intellectually provoking play of the season. Arthur McDonald has taken "Peer Gynt", Henrik Ibsen's sprawling five-act drama, compressing it to two acts with a reasonable running time, and then directed the play of the season most apt to start an audience thinking.

"Peer Gynt" is the tale of a young man, who the program notes tell us is twenty when the play opens, on a quest to find himself. Peer is a dynamic youth, even a rowdy; he takes delight in his strength and doesn't mind bragging of his accomplishments, even when he hears of the impending marriage of Ingrid, he abducts her; he is condemned by his society for the act, and is forced to leave Assa, his aging mother.

As Peer leaves the community to find shelter in the nearby mountains, he comes upon a society of trolls in whose company he suddenly realizes that he does not understand or know himself. From this point, the latter half of the first act, and virtually all of the second, is a portrayal of Peer's search for his identity and *raison d'être*.

Dennis Richards plays a superb Peer -- as a sort of grand finale to his stage career here. The part is thoroughly developed, and Mr. Richards gives us the full impression of all sides of Peer's character: that seen by Solveig, Peer's wife; that seen by Assa; and the Peer that Peer himself sees.

Solveig is effectively done by Patty Horn, a newcomer as of "Three Sisters" who has done exceptionally well in her two parts to date. (Bless Dub Narramore for finding her!) Sally Carlson, a veteran of about as many shows as Mr.

Richards, is a highly agreeable Assa, proving in contrast to her Anybodies in "West Side Story" and Anflsa in "Three Sisters" that she can not only assume any type of role, but also execute it with equally admirable skill.

Among the supporting parts, Ron Wilkerson is excellent as the Spirit of Self, the voice that keeps Peer on the quest for identity. His dance/pantomimes are of the same free style that added so much to his portrayal of Riff in "West Side Story". Jeff Alheim, who was the wonderful doctor in "Three Sisters", is the Button Molder--who will melt Peer Gynt down to be made into someone else, since Peer is unable to come to understand his identity. And Kathy Koch and Bonnie Stuart, both in very small parts that figure importantly in the unfolding of the plot, come on very strong during the brief scenes in which they are on stage.

As the play progresses, Assa is seen on her deathbed and Peer returns for a last visit home. When his mother dies, he is alone and unsure of himself--with, he thinks, no one to turn to. The Spirit of Self continues to urge Peer to search for his identity; somewhere Peer comes to a crossroads where he is accosted by the Button Molder. The Molder gives Peer a last few minutes to come to an understanding of himself, after which Peer is to be melted down (as Peer himself melted buttons for amusement as a child) to make another being. But here Solveig enters, and Peer's awakening finally comes; at the same time he finds both himself and the bond tying him to Solveig, and at last he sees that she and her love were all he ever needed.

Though the drama clearly has a message of value, this reviewer has one prime reservation on the style of presentation. The concern is the nearly endless pantomimes and pseudo-choreography; there is, unfortunately, the effect from an overdose of these mimes that the play is consciously trying too hard to be profound, and is being too obvious about its efforts. Understandably this shortens the play by doing in pantomime what ordinarily would take much longer dramatically. But somehow the style smacked of amateurishness in a drama which otherwise was highly polished and smoothly done. Except for this consideration, Mr. Mc-

## Campus Military Recruitment

(Continued from page 1) above, the U.S. military institution is prosecuting an oppressive, imperialistic war of genocide against the people's liberation movements of the Third World. We support totally the effort of the people's movements of the Third World. We want in Indo-China and see the military institution of the U.S. as our enemy. Thus, it is our duty to oppose the ruthless power of that institution wherever and whenever we can. There is no neutral position. One supports either the U.S. military position or the Vietnamese people. We side with the Vietnamese.

- military recruitment on college campuses as well as college ROTC programs provide the military with over eighty per cent of their officers. There can be no doubt that these officers are essential to the military and the war, or that college recruitment fundamentally supports and perpetuates the military and the war."

Discussion on the issue followed with Dean Decker first reading from the "College Placement Policy" and noting that Dean Wells could exercise "reasonable discretion" in asking recruiters to come on campus. In general, there were

Donald's direction is highly praiseworthy, and Dub Narramore's unusual scenic design adds significantly to a production whose quality is indicated by its popularity.

Costumes by Barry Marshall and Jeff Alheim. Production assistant: Julia Wilson. Musical accompaniment: Jim Silman. Lighting by Gail Craddock and Bill Johns. Makeup by Linda Logan. Stage Manager: Jack Liggett.

two views expressed in the group: one was the feeling that military recruiters come under the same heading as any campus speaker; that limiting the military presence on campus would open the College to pressure for a Speaker Ban policy. The dissenting view was that the military were here not for the free exchange of ideas but to try to sell a commodity which is directly related to a genocidal war. Questions were raised as to the percentage of students who opposed military recruitment as well as those who desired to see recruiters on campus. Dr. Hope interjected at one point a call for the end of the "polemic" and, when Todd attempted to answer, stated "I don't care to hear your response."

The students filed out to wait in the hall for forty-five minutes while the Council deliberated. The final decision was passed in the following form:

"A hasty decision on an issue of this importance is poor procedure; therefore, the College Council requests the President to appoint a subcommittee on recruitment, and military recruitment in particular, to make recommendations to the College Council one week from today (Wednesday, May 13), so that the College Council can make recommendations to the Faculty.

This subcommittee will (1) receive proposals from all interested groups or individuals in written form only, (2) obtain a written statement of the tradition or stated policy of this College on recruiters, (3) consult three other colleges to find out their policies, and (4) consult the Student Senate, the Faculty, at least one military person, and any other sources it wishes to consult.

President Hart appointed the following Committee: Dr. W. D.

White, chairman, Mr. Rick Skutch, Mr. Hosea Jones, and Mr. Lietz."

The sub-committee stressed the fact that any written proposals would be welcome, including decisions by other colleges on campus military recruiting, and that the sub-committee report and any ensuing action by the Council would only be in the form of a recommendation.

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