

# MR. ROBERTS:

A  
REVIEW

DONLEY  
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The success of *Mr. Roberts* is probably due to one huge love affair between the play's cast and its director. Certainly Barry Boys instilled something into the people who were a part of this production, because they took what is today a rather trite and worn play and transformed it into something of vibrancy, wit, and charm. It was, in all aspects, a stunning production.

The plot concerns life aboard a ship during World War II. But this is no ordinary ship. The crew has not seen battle and except for their cargo captain (Mr. Roberts) they do not particularly care to. They have a captain who has a fetish for palm trees. The basic drama unfolds as Roberts continually confronts the tyrannical captain. Along the way, the play manages to make subtle anti-war statements.

The three main characters in this play were simply superb. I've heard a lot about David Wood, who played Mr. Roberts; now I'm a believer. His sense of style was completely professional and his understanding of the character never in doubt. He was in complete control all the way; he is a damn fine actor. David Sutor, cast as Roberts' roommate and alter-ego, was also outstanding. He was excellent support for Roberts and their relationship was brought off well. As the captain, Gary Beach turned in a fine character portrayal. His voice and mannerisms were perfect. What was so remarkable about each of these actors' performances is that none ever slipped into the trap of

overdoing anything. Boys' directing ability shows up here, as there is potential for this play to slip into sentimentality and sloppiness. It never happened and these three deserve much credit.

Another excellent portrayal was given by Randall Rickman as the ship's doctor. He was steady and even throughout. But what really made this a fine presentation was the obvious desire on the part of the whole cast to keep the pace moving throughout. The entire cast was outstanding. Credit also should be given to the stage crews who pulled off several difficult scene changes quickly without slowing down the action.

But when it all comes down to it, the one man probably most responsible for the success of this play was Barry Boys. It was something you could almost feel going through the cast, a driving obsession not to let this man down. He obviously has given them incentive, and their desire to give him a high-level performance in return was fully apparent. That is a rare occurrence, and I'm sure it will be remembered for quite sometime. "Hats off" - to the captain and crew of *Mr. Roberts*.

by Mike Ferguson

imagining Dortch as the brutish Stanley. Ron's speech and actions simply did not seem to characterize the nature of the man.

# A STREETCAR REVIEW

by Mike Ferguson

Very few directors would attempt what Bob Murray did in his production of Tennessee Williams' powerful drama, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, presented at NCSA on Tuesday and Friday of last week. Murray had Ron Dortch, a Negro, play the part of Stanley Kowalski, the brawling, animalistic male lead. But Murray's innovation was a staggering success, as Dortch executed a realistic and convincing performance.

The play is a devastating emotional experience which depicts lower middle class in New Orleans, and the relationship between Stanley and his wife, Stella. Their life is interrupted by a visit from Blanche, Stella's weak, sexually hung-up sister. Murray's version lost little of the play's intense tradition. In fact, his production was one of the most emotionally exhausting experiences I've witnessed.

While Dortch's overall performance was certainly top-notch, it took some time for this viewer to acclamate to a Negro as Stanley. But once his character was established, Dortch was in full control. In the early moments, I had difficulty

He soon overcame this difficulty, however, and proceeded to turn in a smooth and honest portrayal of Williams' legendary character.

Dortch was not alone in his fine interpretation. Jill Voigt, cast as Blanche, was exceptional. Like Dortch, she had some difficulty establishing

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Will *Liliom* be the Schools entry in this year's College Theater Festival? Bob Murray isn't sure. The play has twenty-eight characters in it. Taking it to the Festival would mean cutting the cast to 17 and doubling up roles on actors. The School's entry could be one of the "works in progress" ("I'd like to take *Streetcar*," Murray smiled) or a work that hasn't even been conceived yet.

"Who knows", he said, "We may not even enter this year".

*Liliom* auditions will be held this week. The production will open just before Thanksgiving holidays, Nov. 21 and 22., and will continue Dec. 2,3,4,5, and 6.

He also records *Books for the Blind*, and is currently cutting a record.

He performs a one-man show called *How to be an Ancestor* which he has constructed from his own material, and is writing a book on the theater.

He taught acting at Denver University last year. This year he will be teaching college junior and senior Acting majors.

Mr. Donley lives in Croton-on-the-Hudson, New York, is married, and has three children.

## LORENDO REPORTS ON N.Y.C.B.

### BALANCHINE CLASS ORGANIZED

To the surprise of everyone, former NCSA dancer, Cam Lorendo, visited the school last week. Cam recently joined the New York City Ballet and in an interview talked of his first impressions of the company.

The company takes a ballet class six times a week. Mr. Balanchine, the artistic director, teaches four of them while Franca Russell, the ballet mistress, conducts two.

Cam had only taken two classes when he came to Winston-Salem. He told of how each dancer is warmed up, ready to go when Mr. "B" comes in. The class is short but rough, said Cam with a laugh. "For instance, thirty-two tendus each position after plies, or eight grand battments en crois then repeat on half point". He also stated, "everyone looks good too!"

"As a whole it's a fantastic company and many are very friendly and helpful. I'm very excited and still can't believe I'm actually in the New York City Ballet."

Cam could only stay two days because he has been cast in several ballets. "The rehearsals are so organized and thorough", he stated.

It was a restful and enjoyable trip for Cam and an inspiring visit for dancers aspiring to be pros.

The first drive-in movie in Japan will open Nov. 1 with accommodations for 150 automobiles. The theater is part of a recreation center to include a bowling alley, restaurants and a gas station.