

# Duke Players' Scary Genet

Tony Lentz  
DTH Reviewer

Slowly, painstakingly the spider weaves his web. The net of shining strands grows in, and around, and out from itself until the individual lines of shimmering temptation are lost in the sinister majesty of the total image.

And the total image, in turn, is lost, defined and powered by the single silver threads of the careful spider's art.

Just such a studied contrast of part and whole, individual and role, and role and image is being woven by the Duke Players in their production of "The Balcony" by Jean Genet.

Director Earl McCarroll has led his 18-man cast through Genet's maze of reality and illusion with a polish and grace that would put a simple spider to shame.

The play revolves around the "house of illusion" operated by Madame Irma in the midst of a large city ravaged by revolution and fear.

Lonely little men come to this unusual brothel to act out their secret desires in one of the 38 elaborate studios of The Grand Balcony.

The "visitors" don fancy costumes before the illusory mirrors of the brothel and chase their favorite images as Madame Irma watches on closed-circuit TV.

Gradually the role-players are over-powered by their parts, and the reality of illusion turns in upon itself like the infinite reflections of a mirror in a mirror.

The audience becomes caught up in the rapid switches from real to unreal and back until the play snowballs into their laps, pulling the individual viewers into the terrifying stream of infinite reflections.

The entire cast is hereby commended for masterful definition between man, role and image in their individual parts. The keys to the point of the action were carefully polished in each major character's transition from image-chaser to image-chased, and back again.

The play did sag slightly in the early scenes, but nearly every show does. The audience quickly grasped the illusion-reality convention, however, and any questions of slowness were resolved as the sparks of the first scene burst into flames of unsuspecting laughter.

July Olney as Madame Irma carried the essence of the play in her striking portrayal of The Grand Balcony's mistress.

One by one she allows the cracks to show in the smooth mirror-image of the madame, deliberately delicious as the audience first suspects, then knows, that even Irma is in love with her role.

This graceful revelation becomes extremely important when the conclusion of the play forces the audience to the realization that they, too, are in love with their parts in the absurd theatre of life.

Richard Cytowic as the Bishop, Kenneth Allison as the Judge and Hugh Helm as the General are all outstanding in their superb portrayals of sheep in wolves' clothing.

Richard could use an ounce or two of extra energy in the opening scene but he makes up for its absence with his adoration of laces and sequins.

Kenneth is frightfully absurd in his transition from the terrifying judge of good and evil to the whimpering slave of his own executioner.

And Hugh is stupendous as the asthmatic who plays General for two hours with the inspiration of his shapely

steed, portrayed by Mary Ellen Young with considerable dash.

Michael Peterson as Arthur, Nancy Campbell as the Penitent and Vicki Lynn Jenkins as the Thief deserve commendation for not becoming weak links in the chain of action.

Mark Keeler and Sara Cushing also make the best of their small parts as the Slave and the Girl Upstairs.

Susan Swarthout as Carmen strides gracefully through the storm and fury about her, squeezing each line for all the poignancy it's worth.

George I. Rand as the Chief of Police, Betty Holloway as Chantal and Walter Norfleet as Roger could all use more fire in their portrayals.

Each shows a definite mastery of line, blocking and carriage throughout, but the vital reality-illusion contrasts become slightly muddled in a seeming lack of confidence or energy.

In all, a production with the haunting power to make the audience jump at shadows all the way home.

Tickets for this coming weekend may be purchased through Duke Players' Business Manager Jim Spears at 684-3181.

# Campus Calendar

An original television drama featuring Carolina Playmakers and a student from the N.C. School of the Arts will be screened tonight at 8:30 on channel four.

The drama, "The Man Comes from Madrid," will star UNC senior-in-drama Malcolm Groome and David Wood, former student body president of the N.C. School of the Arts in Winston-Salem. Playmakers Homer Foil and Linda Earp are also featured.

The hour-long show was produced and directed last spring as a graduate television project by Carol Wonsavage, second-year graduate in RTVMP. Produced in the department's studios with a student crew, it was accepted for broadcast by the state-wide University Television Network, WUNC.

Groome recently finished playing Thoreau in "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail." Foil played Bailey, Thoreau's cellmate.

Union Coffee House Fri. and Sat. nights this week. Downstairs in the Union. 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. \$2.25 cover charge. Refreshments sold.

A list has now been compiled of students who did not sign the Honor

Code cards during orientation. These students will not be considered officially registered at the University and will therefore not receive semester grades until this card is signed. They should go by the office of the Attorney General, Suite B, Student Union, to sign these cards before Nov. 6, between 2 and 5 p.m.

Lost: Set of car keys with room key attached. Lost Mon. night between Hinton James and Ehringhaus. Reward given upon return. Call 933-5351.

Lost: Reward for the return of important papers and cards in woman's gold billfold lost in undergraduate library on Mon. Finder may keep money in addition to reward. No questions will be asked. Call 933-7154 or 933-7168.

Lost: A pair of octagonal, wire-rimmed glasses in a blue, flowered case. Lost in the vicinity of Murphey Hall. Call 933-1837.

Lost: A pair of tortoise-shelled men's glasses. Some identification on them. Thomas Cox, Clemson, S.C. Call 933-1810.

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<p>NATURAL</p> <p><b>Filet of Flounder</b></p> <p>Slaw and French Fries Hot Grecian Bread</p> <p><b>\$1.19</b></p>	<p>TASTY</p> <p><b>Italian Spaghetti</b></p> <p>Served With Hot Grecian Bread All You Can Eat</p> <p><b>99¢</b></p>

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SUNDAY

**ABRAXAS**

tavern  
106 Henderson Street  
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Hermann Hesse's *Demian* is the story of Emil Sinclair. And at one point as a student, he says of a recently completed painting, "I stood before it and began to freeze inside from the exertion. I questioned the painting, berated it, made love to it, prayed to it, I called it mother, called it whore and slut, called it my beloved, called it Abraxas."

For Emil Sinclair, Abraxas was both god and devil. And his painting had cost so much of himself that it was everything he was. And everything he'd god was. Good. And evil.

Grand Opening this week  
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