

Playmakers complete outstanding season

Rick Sebak
Feature Writer

For the second season in a row, the Playmakers' first production was outside in Forest Theatre in early October. Although rain necessitated cutting off two shows before completion, this season opener, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," was generally satisfying with an especially notable crew of rude mechanicals.

Foster Fitz-Simons staged a rather traditional near-Elizabethan concept of the play and injected an unusual amount of life into the four more-than-star-crossed lovers. Mary Ann Warrick, as

Helena, was especially exciting in this, her final performance on the Playmaker stage after a long and varied career.

The season's second production, Charles Kespert's "The Executioners," was the first Playmaker mounting in the "Second Step" program. An unusual opportunity for young writers to see their shows in full theatrical dress exactly as they desire, the "Second Step" was an experimental venture which brought nationally distinguished directors and critics to Chapel Hill for these productions.

A non-traditional approach and double-casting in three roles were distinguishing factors in the Playmaker

staging of Kespert's play. Directed by Tunc Yalman, "The Executioners" featured numbered rather than named characters and Tom Rezzuto's massive wooden set with ramps, stocks, gallows, and chairs to be broken.

Both "Executioners" and "And The Old Man Had Two Sons" were followed by discussions of the works with author, director, critic, faculty and guests. The unusual form and arrangement of the former play caused much excitement and speculation amidst doubts of its valid theatricality and effectiveness.

Mounted in mid-November, Elizabeth Levin's play, "And The Old Man Had Two Sons," was more conventional and cinematic in its style and content. With a largely non-student cast, "Old Man" had its obvious roots in traditional American family drama. Earl Wynn starred as Thomas Manther, the old man; Harold Scott directed.

The second semester began with a Wild West show extravaganza production of "Indians" by Arthur Kopit, directed by Jon Mezz. With a cast of over thirty members, the Lounge Theatre mounting was well-received by both critics and public. William M. Hardy was Buffalo Bill with outstanding supporting performances coming from Stephen Henderson and Graham Hayes Marlette.

Closing just weeks before the outbreak of disturbances in Wounded Knee, South Dakota, the plea for human understanding and social consciousness was not only effective dramatically, but also quite timely.

In early spring, Tom Rezzuto directed an eight member cast in the North American Premiere of "The City With

Sails," an award-winning Belgian play by Paul Willems. Gordon Ferguson made an exciting Playmaker debut as Josty, the returning Antwerp native who hopes his money will be able to recreate the past.

The season ended in mid-April with "Medea" in Forest Theatre. On Sharon H. Muir's impressively monumental set Arthur L. Housman directed a fast-paced version of Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of the play by Euripides. Cigdem Onat in the title role and Patricia Barnett as her nurse gave two of the season's most powerful and memorable performances.

The 1972-73 Playmaker season included a strangely varied selection of plays, all much more than adequately staged. Unfortunately, however, no great high points or wonderfully magic productions stand out. The season was remarkably consistent and thoroughly interesting, despite an apparent lack of wild theatrical excitement.

Crazy ideas and unusual desires were the basis of many of the productions in the 06 basement theatre in Graham Memorial. Opening and closing their experimental season with recent Pinter ("Old Times" and "Silence"), the Lab Theatre people filled in with a rich selection of old and new seldom-performed plays, with highs and lows coming often unexpectedly throughout.

Shows which will not, cannot, or should not be done by the Playmakers are given simple mountings with emphasis on performance and direction. Much of the energy and unity of vision which was lacking in the Playmaker shows could be found in wonderfully abundant display at the Laboratory Theatre.

The 1972-73 Carolina Playmaker season will probably be remembered as the time when Arthur L. Housman's presence was first effectively felt by the organization. As Chairperson of the Department of Dramatic Art, Housman has been especially effective in bringing several new and innovative ideas to the tradition-laden theatrical group.

The six-play season featured three premiere productions: two new plays from the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, and an award-winning European drama, never before staged in North America.

Dr. Housman said that it is the intention of the Dramatic Arts Department to do at least two more O'Neill plays next year. "The O'Neill foundation was delighted with the reception and treatment which their playwrights and directors received," said the department head. Next year's productions in this "Second Step" program will probably be done one in each semester rather than back-to-back.

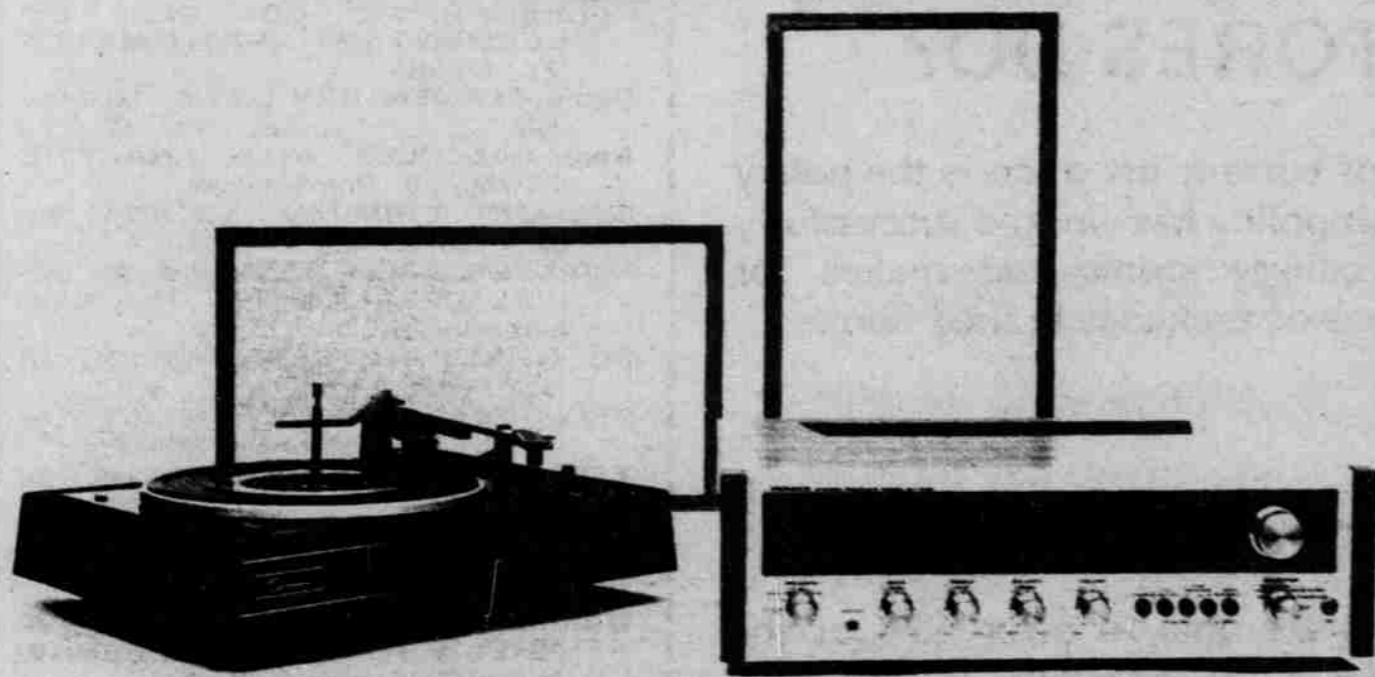
Plans for the Paul Greene Theatre have been progressing throughout the year, but are being held up now by site-approval. Dr. Housman hopes to see ground broken this summer or early in the fall, with an expected 18 months of construction before the new facilities will be ready.

Along with expectations about the new theatre, the Playmakers are looking forward to an entry in the American College Theatre Festival Original Student Play competition, and an experimental "hold-over" staging of their Shakespearean romance next year. It is evident that Dr. Housman's new plans and ideas are going to extend beyond this recently completed season.

Commenting on this past season as a whole, Dr. Housman said that it had been a good year, involved in changes, with a lot of things happening at once. "It was fascinating because it jarred a lot of people. In general, it created a kind of air of excitement which we needed."

(SOUNDHAUS's \$419 stereo system)

**More
than you expect
for less than you
expected.**



Stereo systems in the \$400 price range, while not unpleasant to listen to, have not as a rule provided that last bit of musical accuracy for those who take their listening very seriously. Our \$419 Advent/Pioneer/Garrard/Pickering stereo system has changed all that, as many of our critical and satisfied customers who own it will testify.

The Smaller Advent loudspeakers are a startling speaker bargain, of which highly respected *Stereo Review Magazine* said, "Any preconceived ideas you may have about the limitations of sub-compact speaker systems will, we think be shattered." The Pioneer SX 525 AM/FM stereo receiver provides sufficient power

(over 40 RMS watts of it) to handle the most torturous musical passages in the average living room, and its sensitive tuner will capture your favorite radio stations with clarity. The Garrard SL 55B automatic turntable with a Pickering V15-ATE cartridge and elliptical diamond stylus will treat your records gently and add no unpleasant sounds of its own.

Together, these remarkable components cost just \$419 — a saving of \$54.90 over their usual individual prices. If you've thought that a stereo system in this price range couldn't provide quite enough sonic satisfaction, we invite you to visit Soundhaus and learn otherwise.

SOUNDHAUS

113 N. COLUMBIA STREET
942-3162 - OPEN FRI. 'TILL 9.

Upstairs at Soundhaus, joining Stu Mortell's Leatherworkers, are Rick, Pauline and David in their new Springfield Record Co. — fine, happy people selling records at the lowest prices in town. Viva Springfield!

Choosing a president

Toby Cozart
Editorial Writer

Editor's note: The author was chairman of the Union Current Affairs Committee last year, and is currently involved in an independent study of Union structure and programming. See page 15.

Last week the Campus Governing Council expressed its dissatisfaction with a well-established practice of the Student Union. Next fall, a referendum will place before the campus alternative methods of choosing the president of the Union. Careful examination of the circumstances surrounding the passage of the bill establishing the referendum proves that the CGC has misplaced its efforts. If the Union stands in need of reform, it is not in modifying selection procedures, but in laying down new avenues for student input into its decision-making.

Let me first explain the current selection process. A screening committee consisting of the President of the Student Body, the current Union president, and one faculty member (all on the Union Board of Directors) pre-interviews each of the candidates, subsequently presenting its recommendations to a full meeting of the Board. All candidates are reviewed, and in some cases they are interviewed. To quote from the Union By-Laws: "The vote of the Board shall be taken by written ballot and a simple majority shall be required for election."

The proposed alternative to this "organizational" procedure would have the Union president elected in a campus-wide vote, similar to the election of the editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*.

At first sight it would seem that the elective method would strike a blow in the name of Democracy upon the head of Bureaucracy. By drawing upon my experience in the Union over the past three years, I'd like to shift that somewhat abstracted perspective onto what I believe to be the real issue.

Students are unhappy about Jubilee. The newly-elected president of the senior class included the reinstatement of Jubilee among his campaign proposals. Several members of the CGC expressed themselves similarly in the proceedings of last week's bill. Letters on the subject abound on the editorial page of the DTH.

Why doesn't the Union hearken to such criticism? Precisely because, working under a broad mandate to deliver educational and cultural programming efficiently and effectively, successive Union Activities Groups have come to the conclusion that Jubilee is impractical. Their reasons include (1) freeing programming initiative to work in more creative directions, (2) difficulty in finding a suitable location, (3) problems in booking desired groups all on the same weekend, (4) lack of effective security, and (5) a feeling that the days of big rock concerts are passed.

I have heard little criticism of the Union's selection procedure which did not go hand in hand with a plea for Jubilee. The relation between these issues leads me to conclude that the CGC has missed its mark: the real issue at stake is not who carries on Union programming, but finding ways to insure more student input into that programming.

In general it makes good sense for the Union Board of Directors (a group designed to be representative of different student interests) to select the president of the Union. In so doing, the presidency can be filled with individuals who are both extremely competent and who are committed to the programming "outlines" set down by years of interaction between the student body and the Union. This procedure should not be changed.

What does need careful examination is student input into the programming guidelines used by the Union in its day-to-day work. Jubilee could possibly be reinstated if the student body as a whole was so inclined. Electing the Union president would not guarantee that occurrence, and would leave unsolved the more general problem of student input.