

# Teaching Aspect Of Directing Presents Challenge To Martin

By BECKY BRASINGTON

It isn't often a theatre company is able to snatch a Broadway director away from the lure of New York City. But the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre (SART) has produced two plays this summer under the direction of William Martin, who has directed shows on and off Broadway.

Martin directed the popular musical "Fiddler on the Roof" (returning to SART July 17-19 and Aug. 4-9) and "On Golden Pond," the regional favorite of the summer season. ("On Golden Pond" continues at SART until July 16, then returns July 31 through Aug. 2).

Martin's impressive record, which includes three Broadway shows, also includes five Tony Award nominations and six Drama Desk Award nominations for directing the 1974-75 production of "The Lieutenant." Martin has worked with Eartha Kitt, assisted playwright Edward Albee in the Broadway production of "Seascape," and discovered Eddie Mekka, who plays Carmine on ABC's "Laverne and Shirley."

Smiling sheepishly under the brim of a red baseball cap labeled "DIRECTOR," Martin hardly fits the stereotypical image of the hardnosed Broadway

director. Company members find him friendly and unpretentious, a "super-nice guy." Actors marvel at his perceptiveness and sensitivity. Company member David Poirier, who plays Bill Ray in "On Golden Pond," commented after the first read-through of the play, "He (Martin) was getting us to think about our characters and see things during the first rehearsal that we normally don't think about until the show is ready to open."

But the "nice guy" is also intense and driven. He is often found in his office during the early hours of the morning pouring over a script.

Taking a break from writing notes for the lighting crew, Martin talks about his experience in Mars Hill. "I get a very good, friendly feeling working at SART. There's a feeling of summer camp here." Martin says the pace at SART is relaxed, despite the tight rehearsal schedule of only two weeks per production. He explains that most plays on Broadway are produced in four weeks, with rehearsals scheduled every day, eight hours per day. Martin finds the time factor at SART somewhat frustrating.

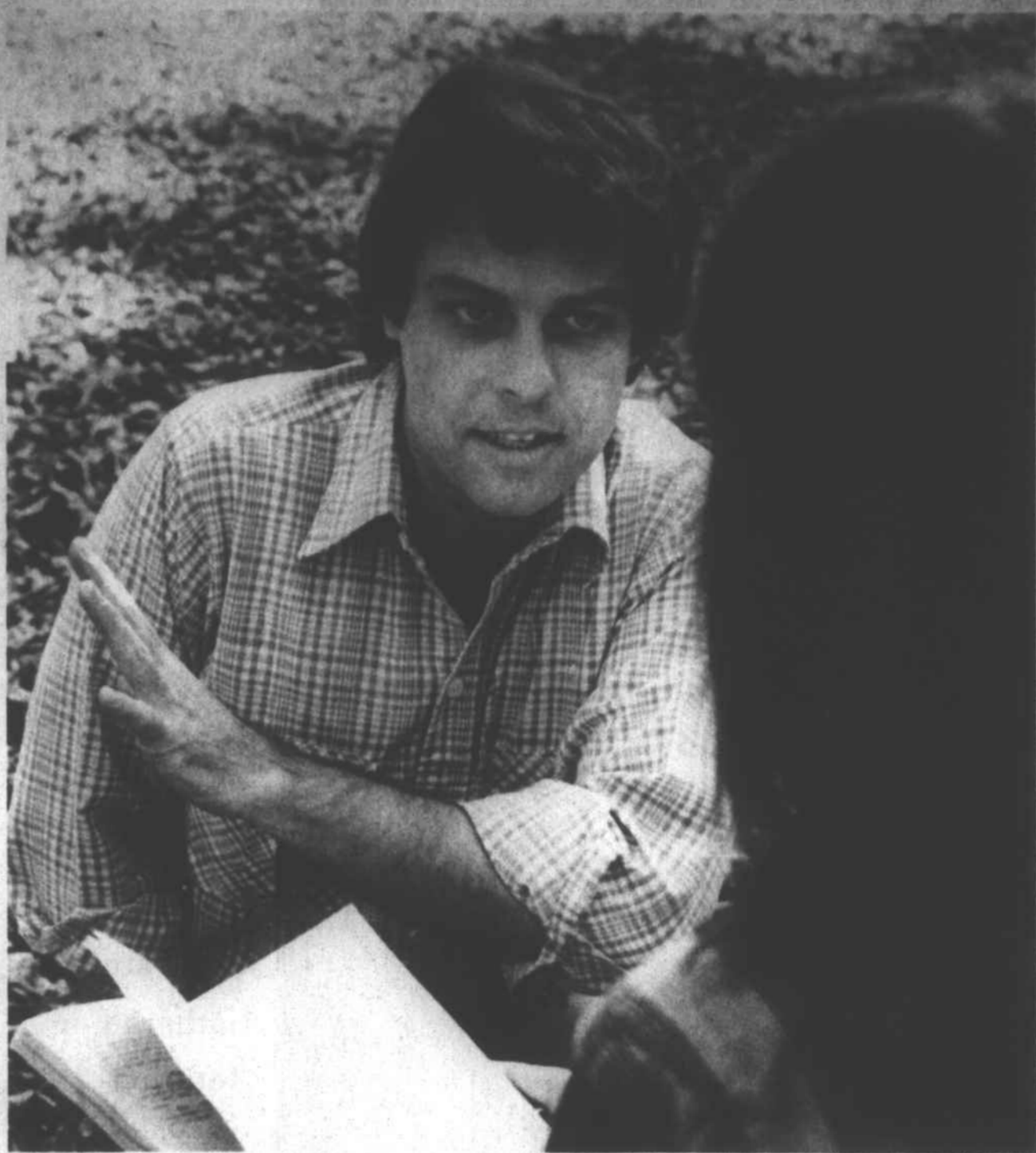
"I can experiment more with the play if I have more time."

Yet he is impressed with the talent and facilities at SART, and finds the "teaching aspect" of directing students a challenge.

What does the future hold for Bill Martin, an established New York director on the brink of breaking into the limelight? After leaving Mars Hill, Martin travels to Richmond, Va., to stage the Richmond Opera Company's production of Scott Joplin's "Tremonisia." Then a return to the Big Apple to search for the break that will allow him to work steadily in the New York City area. Until that time, Martin remains a vagabond, skirting the country to work in stock companies and college theatres between New York engagements.

When asked if he has any lifelong dreams to fulfill, Martin looks surprised and shakes his head, "No." Then he smiles, adding, "I would like someday to own a summer home in Maine or Connecticut, completely isolated from the rest of the world — but still within a hour's drive of New York City!"

What about a return to SART? Martin and SART managing director Jim Thomas are presently negotiating over next season. Martin says "I would like to come back to work on one,



Director Bill Martin Discusses Fine Point of Role With Student Actress

special, exciting project." He smiles mysteriously and will offer no details about that project.

SART performances are \$4. and \$5. Performances begin at 8:15 Tuesday through Saturday, Sunday matinee at 2:30. Make reservations by calling

the box office at 689-1239. "The Front Porch," SART's world premiere for this season, opens July 21 and continues through July 26.

Editor's Note — Tickets for

## General Assemblin' / Minds Work Better On Quiet Stomachs

By JINCY MESSER

Friday was the 131st legislative day, and barring an earthquake or a snowstorm this should be the last legislative week. The unending committee meetings, lobbyists by the bushels, the hot humid days along with redistricting has everybody in a tizzy. It's time to go home. Lots of people drop by the

Legislative Building. But one of the comeliest was America's Junior Miss, Kimberly Smith of Raleigh. Wednesday the Wake delegation led by Rep. Marvin Musselwhite escorted her to the House lectern. Miss Smith told an admiring audience she is "joyously happy with her title and delighted to call Raleigh home."

Rep. Melvin Creecy arose to wonder, "I'm not used to being around celebrities. I'd be obliged if this young lady would shake my hand as she passes by." Miss Smith did and Creecy beamed. A little later the benevolent Gentleman from North Hampton opined that "these ladies and gentleman are to hungry to think straight. Mr.

Speaker, I motion to let them have food and drink brought in." The "noes" shouted the "yesses." Speaker Ramsey ruled with the "yesses." Creecy is black and is the spitting image of Uncle Remus and puts on a good show and is fast coming along as the official rules-suspender for food and drink on the House floor.

Redistricting has been a bugaboo but is coming along. It's tradition that the Senate not tinker with the House district plan nor the House with the Senate plan. But Wednesday Senator Russell Walker tinkered and tried to put his home County of Randolph into another district. Walker's colleagues rebelled and adjourned in a huff. In

the meantime the House simply sat on the Senate plan. The next day without further t' do the Senate passed the House plan and the House followed suit. Neither will be final until passed on by the U.S. Justice Department. About the same time across the hall and after six months of battling, House Chairman of Congressional Redistricting

Rep. Jay Huskins of Iredell finally fought a bill out onto the House floor. House Speaker Liston Ramsey allowed, "Grab a seat, dig in and hang on." Huskins advised, "Buckle your seat belt — it may protect you from your neighbor." He continued, "I knew this would be a challenging task — it has been." The Senate didn't go along

with the House version for congressional redistricting. Now the Senate's own plan and the House plan are in a conference committee made up of a House and Senate member from each of the 11 districts and two GOP members from each house. They were appointed by Lt. Gov. Jimmy Green and House Speaker Ramsey.

## Teachers Put Out With Lawmakers

Continued from Page 1

conscious decision on the part of the small group of men who have seized power in the General Assembly, and they bear the responsibility for making all our public schools less capable of meeting the needs of children."

Wilson said the inaction of the 1981 General Assembly has made the whole profession of teaching less attractive.

"The Assembly, in effect, cut the salary of each and every public school educator in North Carolina by its refusal to consider even a simple cost-of-living increase to help educators keep up with the ravages of inflation."

He noted that the state's

businesses and industries, including the supposedly low-pay textile industry, have continued to announce salary increases for employees.

He continued: "NCAE will not take this disaster quietly. We will not sit idly by while the General Assembly ignores its responsibility to the children of this state and then blames teachers for its own inadequacies."

Wilson said NCAE has, at his recommendation, reorganized its Political Action Committee for Education with the aim of making it easier for NCAE to identify the enemies of public education.

"We intend to endorse in every House and Senate race

in the next election, and we intend to recruit candidates who understand and are sympathetic to the needs of public education," Wilson said.

He said the reorganization of PACE puts that unit directly in the hands of the president of NCAE and is a clear indication of the importance teachers now place on political action.

Wilson said he is particularly incensed that the 1981 General Assembly "could find \$4 million to build show barns for horses at the same time it was ignoring the needs of handicapped children and could increase the appropriation for private higher education at the same time it was telling teachers and state employees

that it could no longer afford to pay for their medical insurance."

Wilson said NCAE will prepare a report card on members of the 1981 General Assembly and will share this information with its local unit leaders and Political Action Committee leaders.

"I would hope that the people of North Carolina would want to join us in our determination to put their public schools at a higher priority," Wilson said, adding that he is "sure the people who pay the bills — whether it be for horse barns or teachers — are going to be just as incensed as I am when they discover their children have been short-changed and ignored."

## Sexton To Run For State 4-H Office At Raleigh Congress

Peggy Sexton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wade Sexton of Route 1, Alexander, will be a candidate for the State 4-H office of reporter when the N.C. State 4-H Club Congress convenes at Raleigh July 20-24.

Miss Sexton, 17, said she feels she has greatly benefited from her 4-H experience over the years, and "it is time to give something back to the organization."

"Whether I win or lose the election, I feel I will have profited from the experience, and I will have gained from the many friends I will have made," she said recently.

Miss Sexton has been a 4-H Club member for the past 12 years, starting at the age of five. She has held all executive offices on the local and county level, and she is vice president of the Western District of 4-H. She has won numerous

awards with her projects on the county and district level, and she has represented Madison County at the State Electric Congress and the 4-H Club Congress for two years and the State Clothing Camp. She also went to Wisconsin last summer as a 4-H Junior Leader.

Some of the events at this year's 4-H Congress include induction of new members in the 4-H Honor Club, State Fashion Revue, State Demonstration and Activity Competition, and election and induction of new State Council members.

Miss Sexton and Allen Stines of Marshall have been selected as new members in the Honor Club. Membership in the club is bestowed on youngsters who are considered the best 4-H'ers in the state, according to 4-H officials.

### A Nice New Touch.

### New Touch Tone Phones.

Touch Tone® phones are a luxury you deserve to know about. The Touch Tone difference is simple. Instead of dialing the slow, old-fashioned way, all you do is touch the digits and talk. It's that easy.

Touch Tone phones come in a variety of exciting colors, with standard and decorator models to suit almost every room in your home.

And the cost is less than you'd think. New Touch Tone phones. Fast, simple and so convenient. For more information call your Continental business office or visit your local Phone Fair. And give your home some nice touches. (Touch Tone phones are not available in some areas.)

**Westco Telephone Company**

Equal Opportunity Employer