

Local

'Lovers' and laughter fill Forum during plays

By TERRY DURAN
Battalion Staff
The Aggie Players have done themselves proud. Again. "Lovers and Other Strangers," a series of five one-act plays written by Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna, played to an attentive, laughing audience of about 100 Tuesday night in Rudder Forum.

The five short comedies all dealt with the problems encountered by people in love when they fail to communicate. All were set in the New York City of the late '60s or early '70s, when (the program states) "concern for personal freedom was more important than anything, including love."

The first segment, "Worth the Wait?" saw mini-skirted Brenda invited into Jerry the swinger's apartment. Jerry persuades her to come in, and, after chaining the door behind her, tries to take her up on her what-sounds-like-sexually-knowledgeable conversation.

Lauren Specht's Brenda and her overly-literate babbling well deserved the resulting

laughter, although things tended to slip a little too far into stereotype sometimes.

Steve Langsdorf, bearded and shirt half-unbuttoned, was believable as cool cat Jerry trying to make a play for the Saturday night chick he's picked up in the local hip dive.

Both managed to poke fun at some '60-ish pseudo-idealism. "I don't believe in fooling around until the first date," Brenda cries at one point.

The next chapter, "Four-Four Time," had Cathy (Laurie Allison) in tears over Hal's (Rick Salerno) 25th wedding anniversary — with another woman. The two rehash their ten-year affair, protracted by Hal's reluctance to get a divorce. Cathy tries to play a trump card by telling Hal another man has offered to marry her.

Pretty standard stuff — but also quite enjoyable in the humor department. It deserved, and got, the audience's attention and laughter, despite the comic bathroom setting and some shaky stage walls.

After some intermission en-

tainment by the stage crew's silent prop-moving Chinese fire drill, Mike woke Susan up at 4 a.m. to show her his "Silver Tongue, Clay Feet."

Mike has gotten cold feet about their wedding, which is four days away. Richard Strayer as Mike put on a rapid-fire one-man rationalization show; meanwhile, Susan, played by Beth Seibert, listened with acting skill at least equal to that needed for Strayer's part, although she said less than two dozen words until after he was finished.

The audience heartily approved of the skillfully-done ending, as evidenced by heavy, prolonged applause and whooping.

The first three chapters were light, funny and 10 to 15 minutes long apiece. Then the Aggie Players unloaded the heavy stuff with a 40-minute masterpiece titled "You'll Understand, Dad, When You're My Age."

Frank and Bea are railing at son Richie because he and Joan have decided they want to get a divorce. Miki Bone's masterful portrayal of the hovering mother — "Eat, eat. It's good veal." — almost overshadowed Scott Bishop's fine job as the potbellied, incompetent father who really doesn't know what to say.

Technical effects — Bone's nasal New Yorker twang and both parents' salt-and-pepper hair, along with the mother's maidish gray dress and white apron — were very effective.

Dan C. Sullins as Richie gave a powerful and convincing performance as the son, as did Shawn Brown with the daughter-in-law's character.

The segment's material lent itself well to the actors' skillful performance. Although funny and cliché-ridden, the gradually developing picture of the two parents staying together for the wrong reasons was serious, grim even, and thought-provoking.

Frank and Bea and Richie and Joan were a hard act to follow, but the semi-serious mood was dissipated with the upbeat "Size 42 Pants, We Can Both Fit."

Applause for the final chapter was heavy, and turned into a standing ovation as the entire cast came out together for the curtain call.



Photo by Cheryl Maynard
Bea (Miki Bone) and Frank (Scott Bishop) fret over son Richie's (Dan C. Sullins, seated) marital problems in "You'll Understand, Dad, When You're My Age," one of five one-act plays put on by the Aggie Players in Rudder Forum Tuesday night.

Prehistoric skulls studied at A&M

Skulls of at least 28 men, women and children beheaded in Mayan ceremonies more than 1,000 years ago are undergoing X-rays at Texas A&M University to determine if the bones can tell scientists more about day-to-day life in prehistoric Central America.

The skulls, many in an advanced state of decay, were unearthed last year in Colha, a principal Mayan tool-producing center in the nation of Belize, said Dr. Gentry Steele, a physical anthropologist at Texas A&M.

The X-rays will provide information on bone fractures and can pinpoint lesions inside the skull from diseases such as cancer, although none of the Mayans in this study show signs of tumors.

Teeth from the skulls are also being examined by Steele and graduate students at Texas A&M in an attempt to determine diet, which holds clues to the exploitation of agriculture in the region.

Many of the teeth had been filed by the Mayans into "V" and dovetail shapes, apparently to follow cultural or style dictates.

Some of the skulls had been deformed by binding the head between boards, another cultural style, Steele said.

He said the executions or sacrifices, part of either a religious ceremony or a symbol of social upheaval, included nine children under age six, nine adult men and nine adult women.

Since the largest group of people slain was associated with the number three (three groups with memberships in multiples of three), the slayings had some important significance and were not random executions, he explained.

The Texas A&M researchers said the skulls were partially preserved because the temple where the skulls were buried had been burned soon after the killings and part of the scorched stonework crumbled down to cover the burial pit.

Steele is studying the skulls as part of a joint exploration of Colha between Texas A&M and the University of Texas at San Antonio, co-workers on the project for almost three years.

A&M freshman killed in Navasota car wreck

A Texas A&M University student was killed and another slightly injured early Tuesday in a one-car accident in Navasota.

Pronounced dead at Grimes Memorial Hospital about 2 a.m. Tuesday was Harold James Ewald Jr. of Arlington, a freshman marine science major. He lived at 3902 College Main #402 in College Station.

Treated at the scene for minor cuts and injuries was Kyle W. Barnette, a freshman psychology major from Corpus Christi. His local address is 3802 College Main.

According to the Department of Public Safety, the car driven by Barnette failed to negotiate a curve at Spur 515 and Montgomery Road in Navasota, hit a telephone pole and turned over about 1:05 a.m. Tuesday.

Silver Taps for Ewald will be held next fall.

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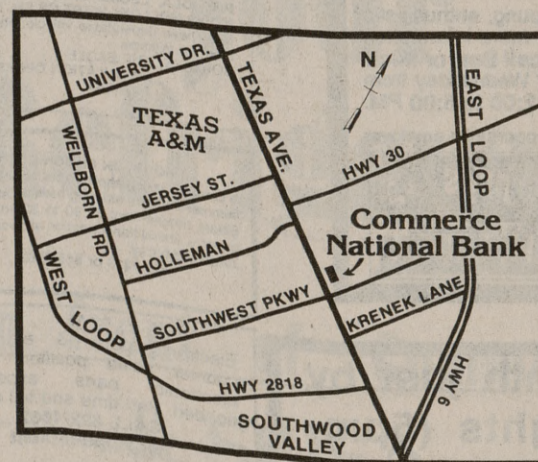
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