

'Beyond Therapy': outrageously human

By LEIGH-ELLEN CLARK
Co-Editor

Beyond Therapy is Christopher Durang's satiric look at courtship and psychoanalysis in America today.

"This is a play about relationships, a dreaded word," Peck Phillips, the student director, says. "It deals with how the characters choose to act and react." Durang's characters are exagger-

ated studies of people we know, people that we walk around with every day, Phillips says.

The play revolves around Prudence and Bruce, both are "into" therapy and look to their respective therapists for advice on commitment and relationships. This is a comedy, but the subject is real and everyone should identify with it.

Prudence, in her late twen-

ties and looking for love is guided by her "macho" therapist, Stewart. He has doubts about his own masculinity and tends to overdo every male trait that he can think of to reassure himself. His advice to Prudence is to be more aggressive — actually, he wants her.

Bruce, in his early thirties and also looking for love, has a whacky woman for his therapist. Charlotte, the therapist with a tendency to follow her impulses — however off the wall they may be — can be a sexual temptress one second and then suddenly childlike. Her advice to Bob is to place a classified ad in the paper to meet a nice girl. She doesn't know about Bob, Bruce's lover who isn't too thrilled that he's looking to date a woman.

It's confusing, but then relationships usually are.

"The play is about triangles," Phillips says. "Up until the very last scene there are only two people on the stage at a time — but a third person is always very present. When Prudence and Bruce get together, the third person that you feel is Bob. Between Bob and Bruce, it's Prudence."

During preparation for the play, the Aggie Players were taken through a lot of improvisation. In rehearsal, Phillips asked the third "invisible" character in a scene to be present. The actors could experiment with how they would interpret the scene if they were talking to the third instead of behind his back.

"We could explore the tensions that way," Phillips says.

Before the play ends every

character becomes a therapist to the other characters.

"Finally they move beyond talking and into action," Phillips says. The last scene is action packed and the characters' relationships resolve into logical couples.

"The play maintains intelligence but still has a schmaltzy ending — Durang wanted it that way," Phillips says. "There's nothing wrong with

that — it works.

"The characters are outrageous, yet very human," he says. "They just take the normal impulses to an extreme."

The play will be presented by the Aggie Players in the Rudder Forum, 8 p.m., on March 5 and 6. Admission is \$3 for the general public and \$2 for students. Aggie Players season subscribers are admitted for \$1. ♪



Jennifer Berry plays Charlotte, an eccentric psychiatrist in the Studio Production *Beyond Therapy*. The play is directed by Peck Phillips, junior, and through satire, explores relationships and the "therapy" generation.

Series to give student talent at student prices

In an attempt to develop student audiences at local cultural events, MSC OPAS has announced the J. Wayne Stark Concert Series.

The major difference between these concerts and most MSC OPAS activities is the price. Concerts in the Stark series will cost \$1. The series will present student talent.

The first concert will be presented Sunday, March 3 at 8 p.m. in 201 MSC. Waterloo, a brass quintet made

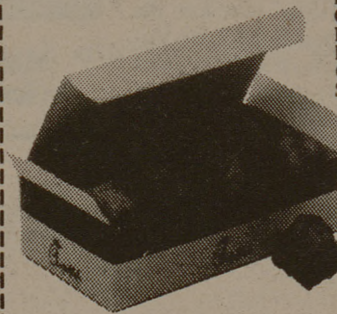
up of University of Texas students, will play pop, jazz and classical selections.

Cantilena Chamber Soloists will be presented in the second concert in Rudder Theater on April 22 at 8 p.m.. A trio, the Soloists play Renaissance Baroque music and wear costumes.

On April 28 will be the Texas A&M Composer's Contest. Student composers will perform their own pieces of music in recital in All Faith's Chapel at 3 p.m. ♪

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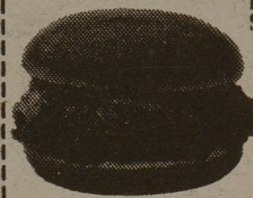


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