

Review: 'Foreigner' entertaining, professional

Review

By Staci Finch

Reviewer

What do you get when you cross a shy Englishman with a bunch of down-home, friendly Georgians? You get "The Foreigner," the latest effort by the Aggie Players.

The story is simple. Englishman Charlie Baker comes to Georgia to get away from his wife, who is cheating on him. He stays at a hotel near the military base where his friend, Froggie, is stationed. Because he is shy, Froggie tells the others at the hotel that Charlie is a foreigner and can't speak English. Consequently, the patrons air their problems, hopes and connivings openly, and Charlie is caught up in quite a soap opera.

This scenario provides a background for some of the best comic acting seen at A&M recently. Understandably, the cultural dif-

ferences between the "foreigner" and the residents is a source for humor in itself, but the comic acting by the players multiplies it by a thousand.

Most amusing is Mark Hadley as Charlie Baker. A young Englishman who thinks his wife is bored with him because he has no personality, Baker gains confidence in himself as he helps the residents of the hotel through his role as the foreigner. Hadley handles this serious part of the character, as well as the humor he creates — very well. At times his gestures are more fitting for a proscenium stage than an intimate dinner theater, and there are a few noticeable slips in the English accent, but the rest is wonderful. His portrayal of the "foreign" customs is hilarious, and his amusement at the patrons who take him so seriously is an excellent example of understated comedy.

But Hadley doesn't carry the show alone. Baker's Australian friend Froggie was won-

derfully played by Matt Hunt. Although the Australian accent may have been a little *too* thick, Hunt portrayed the boisterous soldier who really cares about his friends with professional flair.

This play was about stereotypes, and the actors took their stereotypes seriously. Kent Hawes was amusing as David Lee, the southern preacher who cares for his flock on the surface, but plans to rid the world of all "foreigners," be they black, Jewish or merely from another country, behind the scenes. Hawes' portrayal was a bit *too* stereotypically southern preacher, but it was good.

Another predictable character (since the play is set Georgia) was Catherine the southern belle, played by Suzanne Martin. A wealthy former debutante now engaged to Reverend Lee, Catherine learns she is pregnant, and is not happy about it. She spends the rest of the play trying to find out what she wants, and learning that there is more

to her fiance than she previously thought. Martin does a good job with this part, but she worked too hard at acting bitchy instead of just being bitchy. But when Catherine told Baker her problems, Martin's work really came through. The audience saw a whole part of Catherine not previously seen, and was with her all the way.

The best stereotype of the cast was Steve McCauley's work as Owen, the property inspector who is in with Lee to take over America for the Americans. One look at him, and you scream REDNECK, and the acting didn't disappoint us. McCauley was perfect as the bullying, loutish Owen, whose limited intelligence is a source of amusement to the characters and audience alike.

Rounding out the cast was Pamela Saxon as Betty, the 90-miles-an-hour-talking owner of the hotel who makes everything her business, and Jamie Spencer as Ellard, Catherine's brother. Saxon was hilarious as

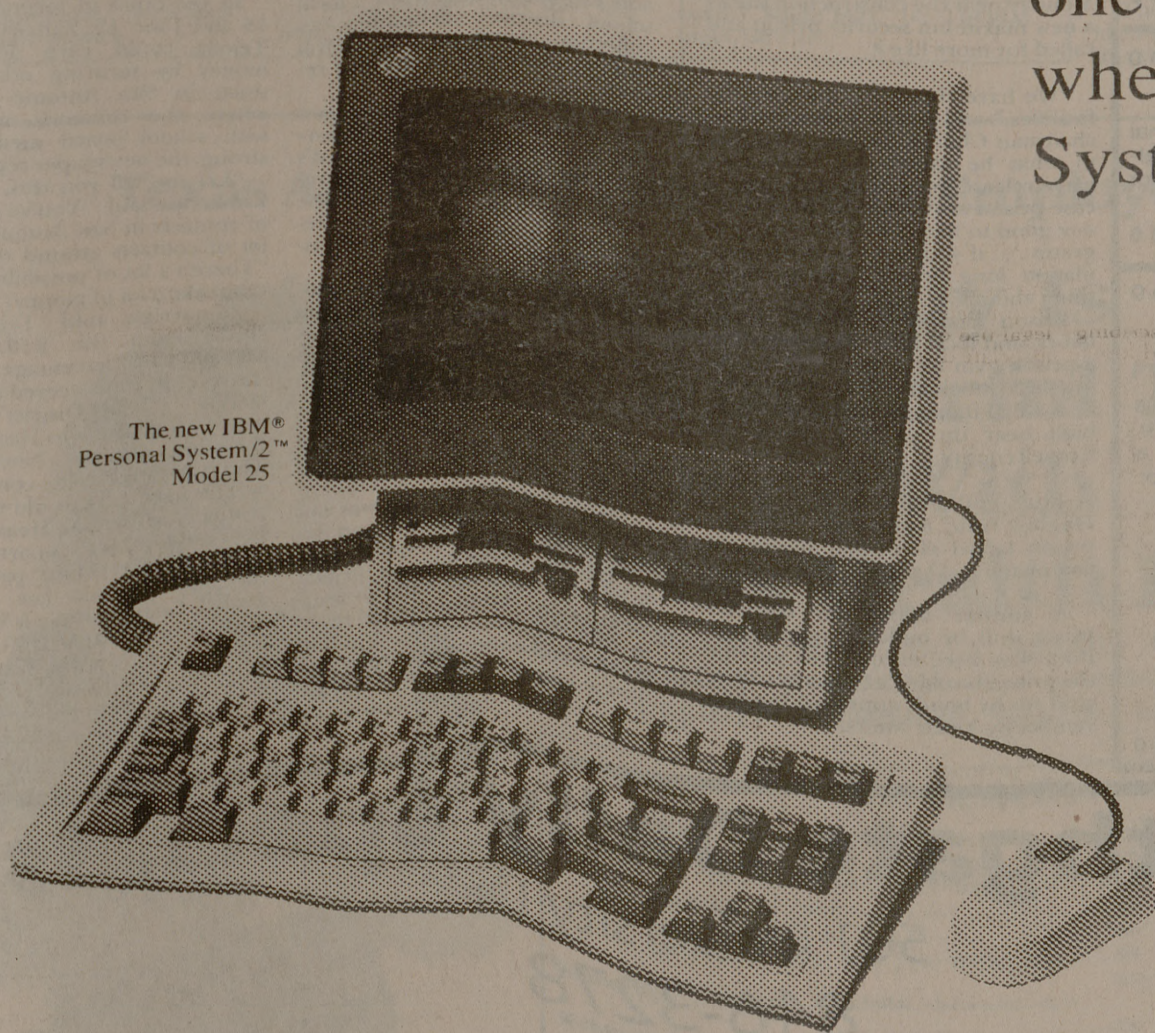
her character dealt with the wonderful arrival of something she had never seen, a foreigner. Although age is always hard for the young to play, the audience easily forgave the few times Betty didn't seem over 30, and enjoyed the performance immensely.

Spencer played the role of Ellard, the supposed half-wit who really wasn't so stupid, to perfection. Ellard's role model had to be Gilligan, but Bob Denver didn't have anything on this guy. Spencer's work was so convincing that when he came out for his curtain call, the expression on his face was so different from that during the show it was hard to believe it was the same person.

The show was directed well. The actors had a small space to work with, but everything was handled professionally. Clever handling of stage props made scene changes brief, and the technical tricks used went off well and without a hitch. All in all, it was a very entertaining show.

Buy an IBM PS/2 Model 25, and we'll throw in the Works.

Now get Microsoft Works four-in-one software at no additional cost when you buy an IBM Personal System/2 Model 25.



The new IBM® Personal System/2™ Model 25

We've combined the Model 25's ease-of-use with Microsoft Works easy to learn word processing, database, spreadsheet, and communications programs. So, now you can learn to do more, more quickly. And, a **new 20MB** fixed disk option means you can store more, too.

Until August 31, 1988, we'll throw in the Works. And you won't have to throw in another cent.

And until August 31st, you can buy the PS/2 Model 25 at prices you've never seen before.

Stop by the Texas A&M Micro Computer Center today and see the IBM representative for details.

IBM The Bigger Picture

Some restrictions apply. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. IBM, Personal System/2, and PS/2 are registered trademarks of IBM Corporation, 1988.