By RUDY CORDOVA JR. From New York to Hollywood, "Driving Miss Daisy" has left its tire marks on the stage and screen. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Alfred Uhry is now making those same

Daisy's son Boolie Werthan hires

tion is to his work and service for

others. Daisy feels threatened by the

fact she is forced to depend on someone, but ends up admitting to

tire marks in Bryan.

Theater drives Miss Daisy down uneven road



Photos by Söndra N. Robbins

Directed by Donnie Wilson, Stage Center opened their 26th season with "Driving Miss Daisy" and a mes-sage to all theater lovers. Community theaters can still ride with the (Above) Boolie Werthan (Dave Kelton), Hoke Coleburn (Harold Prerest of them. Sometimes, Stage Center's ride was a little bumpy, but it sley) and Daisy Werthan (Wanda Daisa) try to settle a disagreement

in a scene from Stage Center's opening performance of "Driving Miss Daisy." (Right) Hoke chauffeurs Miss Daisy around town.

eventually reached its destination. Set in Atlanta, Georgia in 1948 Hoke, later in the play, that they are best friends.

"Driving Miss Daisy" is the story of two people from two different worlds who realize they live with hu-The play's climax comes as Hoke man prejudice, just like the rest of us. Daisy Werthan is an elderly Jewand Daisy are driving to the Jewish temple and are forced to turn around. The temple had been bombed. Daisy repeatedly vells 'I can't believe it! I'm sure they meant ish woman who cannot accept the fact that she's growing old and growing more and more dependent on others, especially when she has to depend on a black man. to bomb one of the conservative synagogues or the orthodox one.

Hoke then quiets her with the most truthful line in the play.

"It doan' matter to them people. A Jew is a Jew to them folks. Jes' like light or dark we all the same nigger," an enthusiastic chauffeur named Hoke Coleburn, whose main dedica-

he says. Wanda Daisa plays Daisy Werthan

with grace and style but lost much of her emotion throughout most of the important scenes. She was poised, yet she wasn't pushed hard enough to actually submit to the role. I have to mention though, that Daisa played well off of Harold Presley who plays Hoke.

Presley commands the stage with his presence. He was the only char-acter that actually forced me to believe him. Everything Hoke Coleburn wanted to say came through in Presley's performance. Boolie is played by Dave Kelton, who gives a respectable performance as Daisy's

The actual weakness of the play was in the transitions. The story moves quickly from one scene to the The actors looked rusty and would have gained much authority

with another rehearsal.
Wilson directed "Driving Miss Daisy" without much focus. The problem is that there was not much of a cooperation between the written text and the performance. There is a lot of word play that was missed in the performance which could also be

attributed to opening night jitters.
Scott Bagby designed the set and the lights. I did not have a problem with the set because it served its pur-

pose. The lighting, however, was an annoying distraction.

Harsh shadows were created by

the use of front lighting only. The problem could have been eliminated through the use of on-stage lighting.
For example, there was a desk and

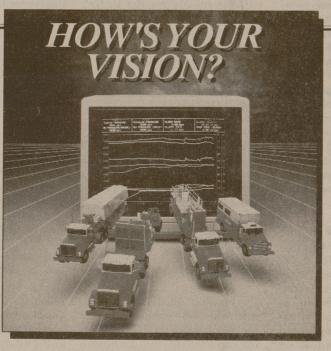
table that could have housed a lamp, thereby creating more of a natural effect. The scenes in the car, however worked beautifully because of the overhead lighting.

The use of slide projectors to impose images on screens behind the actors was a great addition to the play. A brilliant idea was used and experimented with and the director

made some wonderful decision. The slides helped to convertimages that Alfred Uhry had tended through the text of the part of t

Overall I congratulate Stage ter for an honest performance. I though at times I felt that the tor did not go far enough, Istal-ommend this play to an aude that is willing to listen and un stand what Uhry is trying to say.

Stage Center continues their duction of "Driving Miss Daisy" three more performances on T day, Friday and Saturday at 8 Tickets can be reserved by the Box Office at 846-0287.



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