

This Side of THE Hill PLAYERS
PRESENT

BUS STOP



by william INGE
DIRECTED by
MARGARET HARRIS

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WRITTEN by WILLIAM INGE
DIRECTED by MARGARET HARRIS

CAST

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

ELMA DUCKWORTH, a waitress..... ANN MARIE TAYLOR
GRACE HOYLARD, OWNER OF THE RESTAURANT .. CATHY MCNEAL
WILL MASTERS, A SHERIFF .. LARRY BOSTOW
CHERIE, A CHANTEUSE .. AMY FRENCH
DR. GERALD LYMAN, A FORMER COLLEGE PROFESSOR ALFRED D. ROSE
CARL, A BUS DRIVER .. JERRY KARABENSH
VIRGIL BLESSING, A RANCH HAND .. BILL RITCH
BO DECKER, A YOUNG RANCHER AND COWBOY .. JOE F. WISE

SCENES

THE ACTION OF THE PLAY TAKES PLACE IN THE LATE 50'S.
THE SETTING IS A STREET-CORNER RESTAURANT IN A SMALL TOWN
ABOUT THIRTY MILES WEST OF KANSAS CITY

ACT I

A NIGHT IN EARLY MARCH

ACT II

A FEW MINUTES LATER

ACT III

EARLY MORNING, ABOUT 5:00 A.M.

THERE WILL BE INTERMISSIONS BETWEEN ACTS.
COFFEE AND REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
IN THE MIRROR ROOM ADJACENT TO THE AUDITORIUM

Produced by Special Arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

PREVIEW

Wednesday, Mar. 18, 1992

Half Moon Bay Rev

Theater troupe rolls out 'Bus Stop'

By CATE CALLANTA
Special to the Review

This Side of the Hill Players will present William Inge's popular classic "Bus Stop" beginning March 20. An exploration of the humanness of love, loneliness, and relationships, the themes of the play are universal.

Due to the movie version starring Marilyn Monroe, "Bus Stop" is perhaps the most well known of Inge's work. Like his other major plays, "Come Back Little Sheba," "Picnic," "The Dark At the Top Of The Stairs," it explores the many facets of love and loneliness. According to director Margaret Harris "It's magnificent . . . Really, they are opposite sides of the same coin."

The play revolves around the love story of Bo Decker (Joe F. Wise), and Cherie (Amy French). Bo has kidnapped the nightclub singer with the intention of taking her home to his ranch in Montana. Just two of the travellers forced to seek refuge from a snow storm in a small diner outside Kansas City, Kan., Bo and Cherie's plight acts as the catalyst for most of the other characters' stories. As the play unfolds, their stories expand and support the play's themes and messages and a journey of dawning awareness and growth is revealed.

The diner's proprietor, Grace (Cathy McNeal), and the waitress, Elma (Ann Marie Taylor), have hot coffee, food, and other offerings for the travellers: Bo's loyal friend Virgil (Bill Ritch), the lonely Dr. Lyman (Al Rose), and the amorous bus driver, Carl (Jerry Karabensh); while Will, the local sheriff (Larry Bostow), dishes up his fair share of advice. Into the wee hours of the morning we are privy to the dreams, loves, frustrations, disappointments and disillusionment of these eight people.

The play revolves around the love story of Bo Decker and Cherie. Bo has kidnapped Cherie to take her home to Montana but they become stuck in a snow storm in a diner outside Kansas City.

the American classics due not only to its timelessness but also because it illustrates issues and concerns all people share. As in life, Inge balanced the happy with the sad. That balance was also representative of Inge's own personal life. An alcoholic in constant battle with depression, he still experienced the success of a Broadway career. According to Inge, all of his plays "represent something of me, some view of life that is particularly mine that no one else could offer in quite the same style and form."

With "Bus Stop" he intended not as much a linear story as a "composite picture of varying kinds of love, ranging from the innocent to the depraved . . . trying to prove that a play's merits can exist, not in the dramatization of one soul-satisfying event, but in the overall pattern and texture of the play."

Inge wrote at a time when many of America's top playwrights were exploring American life and the driving forces inside the individual. A contemporary of Tennessee Williams, Inge's work has been described as "a more naive Williams." Using every day people in rather commonplace situations, Inge explored the American middle class and its morals. He was very impressed with Williams' "Glass Menagerie" because, for what he felt was the first time a playwright



Paolo Vescia / Review

Bo Decker (Joe F. Wise) carts off Cherie (Amy French) as patrons look on in "Bus Stop." Other actors, from left, are Al Rose, Larry Bostow, Jerry Karabensh, Cathy McNeal and Ann Marie Taylor.

ordinary people and presented them in "high drama."

A quiet rivalry between the two playwrights began when Williams' "Camino Real" failed at a time when "Picnic" was experiencing success. The relationship was further strained when "Orpheus Descending" ran only eight weeks to the 468 performances of "The Dark at the Top of the Stairs." Meade Roberts, a friend of Williams', said that Williams was very jealous of Inge's success. He thought Inge wrote better dialogue and had a truer ear for regional speech.

Cast and director have been captured by the play. There is much to discover within the characters and the situations and

Harris has been "thrilled" with how quickly and seriously the actors have considered the "deeper ramifications" of their characters.

And the crew supporting the production is perhaps one of the largest for such a small play. Using more than one person in areas often covered by only one, Harris enjoys bringing new people into the group and teaching them the skills necessary to make a play a success while providing the fun and inspiration that will make them come back and want to be involved again and again.

Harris, who directed "The Curious Savage" two years ago during the group's first full season, is enjoying "Bus Stop" and, though

sometimes overwhelmed with all of the duties taken on by directors for this group, looks forward to directing again. "We do everything."

"Bus Stop" will run on Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. at the Montara Gardens Theatre, 6th and LeConte Streets, Montara, from March 20 through April 4. Reserved seat tickets are available at Peggy Eriksen's Art and Framing Gallery on Main Street or Bay Book and Tobacco in Strawflower Village. Tickets paid for in advance are \$10, \$12 if purchased at the door. Visa and Mastercard are accepted. For information, or to inquire about other This Side of the Hills Players productions, call 726-0998.