

Critic's Choice

by Ira Levin



July 16, 17, 18 1987
8:00 pm Lee Hall Auditorium
July 19 Matinee 2:00 pm



Starkville Community Theatre presents

CRITIC'S CHOICE

by

Ira Levin

Directed by Robert Wolverton

Set Design by Bob Anderson



CAST

(in order of appearance)

Parker Ballantine *Guy Hargrove*

Angela Ballantine *Nancy Hargrove*

John Ballantine *Ryan Richardson*

Dion Kapakos *Greg Bentley*

Essie *Donna Luther*

Charlotte Orr *Jean Snyder*

Ivy London *Elizabeth Hawkins*

The action takes place in the Ballantine apartment, near Washington Square, New York City. The time is last season. There are three acts with a ten-minute intermission between Acts I & II.

CAST

GUY HARGROVE (*Parker Ballantine*): A native of Memphis (Bluff City), Guy came to Starkville by way of Columbia, South Carolina. His credits of stage performance and directing are most impressive, even including playing a 16-year-old girl as a ninth grader! As Professor of Music Education, Guy has presented numerous concerts, serves as musical director and conductor of the Starkville-MSU Symphony Orchestra, chairs the city's Family Fourth of July celebration, and has run the gamut of musicals from *West Side Story* to *The Mikado*. Equally enthusiastic about tennis, he wields the racquet as adeptly as he does the baton. Asked what he does "normally," he answered, "I can't do anything *normally* ." This is Guy's first performance with SCT, and we look forward to seeing him again in other, non-musical roles.

NANCY HARGROVE (Angela Ballantine): A native of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a Starkvillian since 1970, Nancy is making her SCT debut with this play. She is no stranger to the stage, however, having had college experience as an actress, dancer, and choreographer and serving as dancer director at Columbia College, SC. In January 1985, she played Chick Boyle in Beth Henley's *Crimes of the Heart* with the American Theatre Company in Brussels, Belgium. As a professor and scholar, her research and teaching prowess has led to her being designated a Distinguished Professor at MSU, the only woman so honored thus far. As a tennis player, singles and doubles, she is highly ranked in her age bracket in Mississippi. As a wife and mother, she takes pride in her husband Guy and in their two children, Guy III, a sophomore at Birmingham-Southern College, and Meg, a junior at Starkville High School. Her thoughts about this show? "It's a real experience to have the lead opposite one's husband, especially Guy!"

RYAN RICHARDSON (*John Ballantine*): A native of Gulfport, Ryan came to Starkville by way of Ames, Iowa. Though young, he has appeared in several local productions, including *Huckleberry Finn*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. He is an avid sportsman (basketball, baseball, soccer), and plays piano and trombone, is involved with 4-H, and is active in his church. When he finds time, he enjoys watching television. As he says, "I enjoy doing plays and working with the actors and actresses." We all have enjoyed working with Ryan in this production--he truly is the "precocious twelve-year-old," but, so far, he has escaped spanking.

GREG BENTLEY (*Dion Kapakos*): A native of Fresno, California, Greg has exchanged Fresno raisins for Mississippi muscadines. He joined MSU's Department of English in 1986, with specialities in Shakespeare and modern drama. As our "neophyte," Greg has held his own against the assembled veterans of our cast. He is a tennis and racquetball player, and we hope that this is the first of many dramatic plays in which he will appear with SCT.

DONNA LUTHER (*Essie*): A native of Eupora, Donna has recently joined us as a graduate student in the Department of English. Her undergraduate work was done at Millsaps, where she majored in Theatre and English and minored in History. Her work on stage and behind the scenes earned her numerous awards, including Best Actress (for Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*) and the Backstage Award. She was elected into memberships of Alpha Psi Omega, the theatre honorary (President in 1986-1987), Phi Alpha Theta, the history honorary, Sigma Tau Delta, the English honorary, and Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities. We welcome Donna to MSU and SCT, and we hope to utilize her many talents in the future.

JEAN SNYDER (*Charlotte Orr*): A native of Pennsylvania, Jean came to Starkville and MSU from the beautiful state of Kentucky. Her career has included teaching at both high school and university levels and serving as an administrator, as Head of the Department of Home Economics and Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture. Her stage experience has been well-rounded and includes, most recently, her portrayal of Mary in the *Octet Bridge Club*, SCT's award winning production of the 1986-1987 season. Although she has retired from her university duties, Jean is most active in various hobbies, travel, church responsibilities, and community involvement.

ELIZABETH HAWKINS (*Ivy London*): A native of Indianola and a Starkvillian since 1964, Elizabeth has been wedded to the stage since an early age, having performed in *The Tales of Uncle Remus* in the second grade. Stage appearances, as actor and pianist, have stretched from then until now, with recent SCT performances in *Our Town* and *Tintypes*. Mother of Douglass, now 17, and Haley, now 10, she is the wife of E.O., a Professor of English, and conducts her own career with the Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute on campus. She currently serves as the accompanist at Trinity Presbyterian Church and with occasional groups. She is also on the board of the Starkville-MSU Symphony Association as chairperson of programs for children. Elizabeth notes that she has several "releases from reality," including music, maintaining an herb garden, skiing in Colorado, snorkeling, and (in the future) scuba diving.

PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

Assistant Director: Shay McDonnall

Backstage Manager: Fay Hutto

Publicity/Promotion: Clyde Williams

Properties: Sharon Powe, Barbara Frank, Katherine Stooksbury, Nell Crowe

Set Construction: Bob Anderson, Edwin Ellis, Charles Thomas, Ross Williams, Ralph Olivieri, Shannon Olivieri, Monroe Dewberry, Scott Kowderduck, Bob Fritzius, E. O. Hawkins, Scott McDonnall, Katherine Conroy, Justin Conroy, John Graef

Lighting and Sound: Katherine Conroy, Edwin Ellis

Poster Design: Theresa Haney

Make Up/Hair: Jami Conroy, Terry McDowell, Monroe Dewberry

Opening Night Party: Martha Booth, Mary Hamilton

House: Ross Williams and many others

A SPECIAL THANKS TO . . .

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

No director of any SCT production has ever had as much fun as I have had with *Critic's Choice*. That is so simply because no other director has had the privilege of working with such a talented and congenial cast--and with such a dependable and capable Assistant Director. This "family" has been delightful, complete with its own "precocious" twelve-year-old boy, his father, mother, step-mother, step-grandmother, an energetic Greek director, and a part-time maid. Ira Levin, in writing this play, must have had this cast in mind, even though they were born too late to play in the original Broadway production.

Bouquets to Shay McDonne^{II} for marshalling the many, many people and things needed to make our production possible.

It is your task, as our audience, to sit back, relax, and chuckle or guffaw at this choice cast's rendition of *Critic's Choice*.

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Since this is the final production of the 1986-1987 season, we wish to thank all of our patrons, supporters, and helpers for a most successful (nay rather, banner) year. We hope you will join us again for the 1987-1988 season.

Robert E. Wolverton, Director