Camino Real: ‘a place people come to in their lives when everything is going wrong’

By SUSAN PAQUET
Gamecock Staff Writer

“Camino Real”, a play by Tennessee Williams will open Tuesday, February 20 at Drayton Hall. It is the first University Theatre production this semester and will run five consecutive nights through February 24.

The production is directed by the chairman of the theatre department, Russell Green. Green came to USC in 1965 from Whittier College in California where he directed “Camino Real” ten years ago. Prior to his chairmanship at Whittier, Green directed at the University of Tennessee for eleven years.

In a brief description of “Camino Real”, Green likens it to “a place that people come to in their lives when everything is going wrong. I think that this will touch people because there comes a point in everyone’s life when they think they’ve lost the straight way and can’t get back on the right way again.”

This Williams’ play is not one of the most produced, but it was chosen for the appeal it would have to University students, Green said.

“It offers opportunities to many people who want to act in a play. I used everyone who tried out and have people double-cast in a lot of cases. There are about 75 roles in this play and I think it is important to produce plays as much as possible that gives everyone a chance to be in it.”

Green said “Camino Real” will appeal to students because it is like a wild exotic dream, not in the realistic style at all. Because of this and the dream motif running throughout the play, it provides a theatricality and setting up of relationships of people from history and from Williams’ imagination. Another thing that is interesting is that the play isn’t contained within the proscenium, but some of it spills out into the audience and through the aisles.”

Scene design is created by Terry Bennett. It makes use of three walls of plexiglass surrounding the stage. Plexiglass has been used in scene building in theatres both here and in Europe, but it is rather unconventional.

The five major characters, Gutman, Jacques Casanova, Magurite, Kilroy, and Esmeralda, are not having any unusual problems with their character, Green said.

Rob McGough, who has appeared in University summer theatre productions and regular term shows, portrays Gutman, who presides over the Camino Real. Mike Fortner, a graduate student was seen last semester in “One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest”, “Lysistrata”, the king of lovers, Jill Dalton is acting in her first major role at USC. She plays Marguerite. Jill also appeared in “Lysistrata”. Donnie Dyer, a theatre transfer from N. C. State, appeared to play the character Kilroy. The character, Esmeralda, is played by Donna Pearson, a freshman theatre major who also appeared in “Lysistrata” and “Tom Sawyer”.

Finally, Green thinks of the play in terms of the quote by Dante that Williams put in before the play begins: “In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself in a dark wood where the straight way was lost.”

Publisher to address
Press Association

J. M. (Jim) Cornwell, president of the National Newspaper Association, will address the annual meeting of the South Carolina Press Association (SCPA) here Feb. 22-24.

The Utah newspaper publisher will speak at the SCPA convention banquet Feb. 23, according to William L. Kinsey, Jr. of Charleston who heads the South Carolina press group.

Also planned for the convention, Kinsey announced, is a presentation on “Freedom of Information and Shield Laws” South Carolina Acty. Gen. Daniel R. McLeod and a banquet celebrating the University of South Carolina College of Journalism with a speaking by Detroit Free Press columnist Bob Talbert, a graduate of USC.

The meeting begins with registration at the Hilton Town House Motor Inn Feb. 22. Activities include the annual awards luncheon Feb. 23 with USC President Thomas F. Jones as host and workshop sessions on libel law, promoting circulation and switching to bi-weekly publication from weekly editions.

Women’s Division activities include a speech by Mrs. Strom Thurmond and a tea held by Mrs. Thomas F. Jones at her home.

The Friday banquet speaker Cornwell, a native of Nebraska, was formerly on the staff of the North Platte (Neb.) Telegraph.

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