

# ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

## Student Works Premier

By J. K. MORROW and R. SWARTZ

Four student-written plays and four student-made films were premiered at the University this week, and while they didn't exactly reveal Penn as a haven for young artists, a few demonstrated genuine talent and imagination.

The four original one-acts were selected from over thirty entrants to compete for a \$50 prize in the Penn Player's annual contest. They were presented for the first time last night, and will be performed again tonight at 7 p.m. in Houston Hall Auditorium. Admission is free.

Our personal favorite of the quartet is "Lobotomy for Graduation" by David Malina. Set in a college dorm room, it examines the hang-up of a hard-working student, played by John Verstandig, who suffers from the grand delusion that he can lend a psychologically helping hand to his one-armed roommate Jay Gustin. Malina himself gives a fine performance as the mildly psychotic Jay, but the best acting of "Lobotomy for Murder," indeed, of the whole evening, is that of Michael Pitkow as the third roommate, an extremely enchanting and believable character.

As for the other offerings, "Passing Through" stands out for some splendid dialogue by Gary Stern, a laudable performance from Sharon Willinsky, and subtle direction by Innes McDade. Unfortunately, the plot, boy-meets-girl in a bus station, is rather familiar, and the play could profitably end five minutes before it does.

"What's in the Bag?" by Ronald Cowen presents a delightful absurdist situation in which a young man, effectively played by Seth Kobb, decides to toss his mother out of a cathedral bell tower and ends up convinced to do the same with his father and girl friend. The dialogue, however, is badly overwritten and seems to be based on class notes from Psychology 1b.

"The Execution of Private Sokolowski" tackles a bit more than playwright Stanley Heusler can handle. This study of a lieutenant in an unspecified army who attempts to get the inhabi-

tants of a war-ravaged village or execute a traitorous private doesn't always ring true, but the performances by John Dunlop and Roger Minstein are redeeming.

Highlighting the first public screening of this year's Annenberg School films last Wednesday was a remarkable bio-documentary of Jean Shephard titled "Channel Cat in the Middle Distance."

Filmed by John Sanger and Albert S. Tedesce, it masterfully presents man facets of Shephard's highly individualistic existence. Most memorable is a behind-the-scenes view of Shep's WOR radio program which includes some charming shots of the humorist breaking up his technicians.

Excellent photography and adroitly edited, "Channel Cat" is



David Malina is the star and author of "Lobotomy for Graduation," one of the four original one-act plays being presented tonight by the Penn Players in Houston Hall Auditorium.

flawed only by an overconcern with recording the views of assorted members of the Shephard cult rather than the voice of its principle diety.

The other films in the program failed to live up to the promise of "Channel Cat," although an item by Richard Whitley and Christopher Speeth called "Puny Petunia, a Canine Venus" contains some superb surrealism and "The Lion's Den" by Peter F. Cuozzo, John G. Narvel, and James R. Taylor is occasionally effective in its portrait of a cab driver down on his luck. The fourth film, "20 to the Third," most generously described as a dip in the stream of consciousness, is unsure in both conception and technique, but a few scenes have considerable cinematic vigor.



Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy star in the hit Broadway play "Wait Until Dark," Frederick Knot's drama due at the Forrest Theatre May 1st.

THEATRE PHILADELPHIA

## Year's 10 W

*Editor's note: Randy Swartz, the former Entertainment Editor of the Daily Pennsylvanian, concludes his two part series on the ten best and ten worst films of the year.*

There is something about an awful motion picture that excites and stimulates critics to new heights of barbed verbiage.

Why do they love to dump on a film rather than to sing its praises? By lashing a picture with stinging witicisms and sly puns the critic demonstrates that he is both cock-sure and brilliant.

Unfortunately, the above is the standard opinion of the critic which is held by the majority of the movie going public. Their reaction is at once defensive and critical. They resent someone disagreeing with their likes and dislikes. But what really bugs the critic baiter is that his adversary has an outlet for his opinions, while all he can do his shout down his date.

In reality, we have found that the motion picture critic is a great fan. He loves to go to the movies.

Just talk to Judith Christ, Ernest Shier, or Henry Murdock and you will find that even after many years in the business they are excited about the medium, enthusiastic about good films, and concerned about the future of the film industry.

We had the opportunity to talk to them and many other critics on more than one occasion, and our opinion of their dedication and devotion has not wavered.

What is wavering is our resolve to get to the topic at hand; the ten worst films of the year. Isn't that we are unsure of our picks (we are cock-sure), it is just that we are reluctant to stop praising the exalted position of "critic." However, this being the last issue of the Daily Pennsylvanian this year and the last column we will write as an un-

## Poor Dad

like a stuffed bear-pig is accompanied by a dubbed-in growl which sounds like the MGM lion with hiccups.

This device was, of course, used with equal non-success by