

"Roses Don't Grow Here No More" by lecturer Tom McCorry played here

April 21, 1972

"Roses Don't Grow here No More" a two-act, tragi-comedy dealing with the 1921 revolutionary war in Ireland, is scheduled for six performances in the new theatre at the University of California, San Diego.

The play, written and directed by Tom McCorry, Lecturer in Drama at UCSD, opens Thursday, May 4., and continues May 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13. All performances begin at 8:00 p.m. Seating is \$2.00 for general admission and \$1.00 for students.

Seating for each performance is limited to only 155 seats due to the configuration of the stage set and reservations are recommended. Tickets may be purchased or reserved at the UCSD Theatre or at the Urey Hall Box Office on the Revelle Campus.

"Roses Don't Grow Here No More" concerns a small band of Irish Republican Army members and their American leader who are hiding out from British soldiers during the revolutionary war in 1921. The band has taken part in an unsuccessful raid against a British installation and the bravado, camaraderie, and love of country which held them together are beginning to disintegrate. The true reasons for their involvement begin to surface.

"This is an 'anti-hero' play," McCorry said. "There are no heroes among the six characters; they all reveal flaws when things are desperate. But, they each also reveal redeeming features.

"The closest thing to a hero is Riordan, the American, who is really what you would call a sacrificial hero," McCorry said. "No matter what he does he seems doomed. This has been the pattern of his entire life but in the end it is his actions that let you believe the rest of the group might come off all right," he said.

McCorry, who wrote the play in 1968 as a master's thesis at San Diego State College, said he got the idea for the last scene first and then the rest of the ideas began flooding in.

"Ideas come to me so fast that I take them down in shorthand," McCorry said. "I finally read the shorthand, make changes, make a rough typing, make more changes, and then make a final typed copy with still more changes.

"We are even making changes while in rehearsal," McCorry said. The play was presented at San Diego State in 1968 and was the first play to be granted an extended run in the theatre there.

"Several people have suggested that I update the play to coincide with what is going on in Ireland today," McCorry said. "But, I really believe that it is more relevant today than when I wrote it. It involves a situation that has existed in that part of the world for many, many years.

"The play doesn't set up the British or the Irish as the villain," he said. "It is really about people as opposed to issues. The issues have always been there, caused by the people," he said. "It shows the brutality that basically good men can develop toward others."

McCorry was born in England of Irish parents. He graduated from San Diego State College with a Masters degree in drama in 1969 after working for eight years in business management with the Ford Motor Company in Los Angeles. He has been associated with the National Shakespearian Festival at the Old Globe Theatre for the past three seasons and has also worked with the Association of Producing Artists in New York City. He joined the faculty at UCSD in 1969.

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