

"The Taking of Miss Janie" open in LA

February 15, 1977

The University of California, San Diego production of Ed Bullins' "The Taking of Miss Janie" -- a bitter indictment of the failure of the 60s to create a more unified society -- opens at the Auditorium Theater of the Inner City Cultural Center, Los Angeles at 8:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 25.

"Janie," says its director Dr. Luther James, acting associate professor in UC San Diego's Department of Drama, "is a deeply human tragedy. It focuses attention on a crucial time in America's recent past when social directions were clearly outlined in a manner in which they are not today.

"The 60s with their overt battles," explains James, "clarified American possibilities regarding values and directions. That clarity has faded since the confrontations have stopped. Battle lines were more clearly drawn then. The play is about the failure of the characters to overcome their own subjective weaknesses in order to work for solidarity."

Miss Janie herself, whose "rape" by a black male friend of more than a decade rounds out the allegorical drama, is a symbol of the awkward, unintentionally patronizing white-liberal attitude toward blacks in the early 60s when a spirit of accommodation seemed to be manifesting itself.

The figure for the excesses and deceptions of the 60s is the incessant party through which the characters move over a decade fraught with changing partners, changing identities, changing attitudes and growing cynicism.

Appearing during the Inner City Cultural Center tour are: Carol Davis, Janie; Christopher Wellington, Monty; Marcia Robinson, Peggy; Dick Maynard, Lonnie; James Avery, Len; Susan Denaker, Sharon; Monica Madyun, Flossy; John W. Houston, Rick, and Steve Hagberg, Mort Silberstein. All except Ms. Madyun are UC San Diego graduate and undergraduate students.

Set designer is Steve Lavino. Lighting is by Amarante Lucero; costumes by Suzy Beronius; technical direction by David Kriebs; sound by Larry Swerdlove and Jim Le Brecht, and choreography by Etta Weathersby.

The Inner City appearance is the first of a series of exchanges planned between the Los Angeles theater and the UC San Diego Department of Drama.

"The interchange," says James, "is a unique experiment enabling theatregoers in each community to enjoy the benefits of both."

The two institutions are funding the tour.

The play will also be performed at 8:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 26 and 27. Tickets are \$5.50 for general admission and \$3.50 for students. For ticket information and reservations telephone 387-1161.

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