

# Mateer Stages Thurber Tales



**MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL**, who is the best acting apprentice of them all, might be the thought of Bob Valanty as he applies his makeup before going on stage. Valanty, a recent Penn State graduate, plays several roles including the wolf in the fable, "The Wolf at the Door."



**MAX FISCHER** is the director of the musical review. Earlier in the season he played the lead role in "The 49th Cousin."



**LAST MINUTE** changes in set layout and design are discussed by Ed Anderson, stage manager, and Bill Allison, set designer.



**BEFORE EACH WEEK'S PRODUCTION** the sets are built and assembled in TAPS, the converted Nittany Dining Hall. Joan Skow, assistant to the designer, paints while Ronald Dobkins, an acting apprentice, works on one of the panels.

## 'Carnival' Marks Musical First

By **JOAN MEHAN**  
and **KAY MILLS**  
Collegian Reviewers

Imaginative staging and versatile actors brought vitality to James Thurber's "A Thurber Carnival" at its Mateer Playhouse opening Tuesday night.

**NINE MEMBERS** of Mateer's regular company appeared in a series of scenes based on Thurber short stories and fables on such subjects as invisible unicorns, a drunken Grant at Appomattox, gentlemen shoppers and pet doctors. Featured also was Thurber's tale of "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."

The show opened and closed with high-keyed word dances which were carried off with lively and well-timed performances. The major problem in these scenes was that Lydia Bruce could not regulate her voice. She

seemed to be screaming at the audience.

The customary professional polish was lacking in several scenes as line problems and premature entrances marred this initial performance. The sequences on Macbeth and the island visitor failed to draw the laughter the linds warranted due to these difficulties plus the need for faster tempo.

**MISS BRUCE** also contributed to the Macbeth fiasco but redeemed herself ably later as the wife who would not cooperate in plans for her burial.

Connecting the Thurberesque vignettes into a unified musical revue was the Jean-Ann Trio, which displayed the essential sense of rhythm and coordination of found with action onstage.

Even set changes were a delight as four stage hands became animated Thurber drawings by

wearing black tights and fluorescent wire masks. Particularly intriguing was the dancing of Anita Goshko while male partners Frank Kaufman, Gene Maiale and James Marvel did the heavy scene shifting.

David Frank and Max Gulack were the cast's most consistently amusing members. Leon B. Stevens made it a tipsy trio when, overcoming line lapses in earlier sequences, he joined Frank and Gulack in a gay romp about husbands on a shopping spree. Esther Benson as the salesgirl gave the scene an extra touch of humor. Kay Frey in her second Mateer performance added life and girlish beauty to the production. Miss Frey also displayed an ability for humorous facial expression.

**THIS CARNIVAL** of laughs, directed by Max Fischer, marks an entertaining and enterprising "first" for Mateer in the field of musical revue.

Collegian Photos  
By **TOM BROWNE**



**RADIO ANTENNAS?**—No, these are wire frames bent to look like Thurber's famous pen line characters. Dancer Anita Goshko is having her wire caricature painted by dancer Gene Maiale, whose wire frame is in turn being painted by Joe Bella, manager of costumes and properties. These ballet-set characters dance between scenes under ultraviolet lamps so that the audience sees only the glowing wire frames.



**LITTLE GIRL IS STOPPED** BY A WOLF while going to her grandmother's house in the scene, "The Little Girl and The Wolf." The little girl is played by Kay Frey and the wolf by Leon B. Stevens.