

'Cuckoo':

*a hip morality play
opening tonight*

By Regina Andriolo

One man's struggle against a repressive society is the central theme in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," Dale Wasserman's "hip morality play" opening 8 p.m. tonight in the Playhouse Theatre.

Adapted from Ken Kesey's best selling novel, the warm and funny melodrama concerns the inmates of a mental institution in the Pacific Northwest which is, according to the show's director, a metaphor for the "regimented madness of today's world."

"When we call this a 'hip morality play,' we mean that it is reminiscent of the morality plays of the Middle Ages," director Richard Edelman explained. Edelman also is Artistic Director for the Summer Festival of American Theatre and director of the traveling Arts Company.

Edelman said the play resembles a pop art piece, "...with real heroes and villains, but even the villains are forced into their position because of the system.

"Ken Kesey is a true anti-establishment hippie and this is strongly reflected in his writing. This is also probably why the show was not a Broadway hit, but has witnessed phenomenal success in the hip communities of San Francisco, off-Broadway and on college and university campuses," he added.

"As enlightened as the Broadway audiences would like to think themselves, they are 'establishment liberals,' and when this play appeared in the early 1960s it was just ahead of its time," Edelman said.

As for the play's pop art aspect, the director explained that Kesey, a gifted social critic, is in love with the American myths of the cowboy, the noble Indian side-kick and the good-hearted whore, and expresses this in the comic book terms of the play.

"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" will be presented 8 p.m. tonight and tomorrow night and Nov. 3 and 6 through 10 in The Playhouse. It is recommended for mature audiences.

Diamond in the rough

a 21-year-old student's rock musical



It's not every 21-year-old composer who gets his plays produced at a major university. But student Eric Diamond has written the music, lyrics and book for the rock-musical production the Thespians will present tonight and tomorrow night in Schwab.

The undertaking has resulted in "Brother-Hood," a musical exploring the problems and fantasies facing adolescents in the mid-1960's.

"I first conceived the play in my freshman year," said the 10th-term Diamond. "I presented it to the Thespians this past spring and, using their guidelines, rewrote parts this summer."

Diamond is acting as musical director for the show's band but has left the direction up to Thespian Thomas O'Leary. "I've put my complete trust in Tom and our choreographer, Jeanne Sacco. If they tell me a line has to be cut or rewritten, or that a dance tempo has to be slowed down, I don't take it as an insult to the play but as an improvement for it," Diamond said.

Learning to be flexible is the biggest lesson Diamond has learned from taking part in the production of "Brother-Hood," he added. "I've also learned to be very picky about the people that are cast and that certain things that might look terrific on paper just can't work on stage."

Diamond said he feels it is difficult to obtain play writing experience. "If you're

an actor, singer, dancer, technician or musician, you can get experience from being on stage, in the pit or backstage. But where does someone who writes the play get exposure?

"Also, the theater system as it exists today is one where onstage performers are usually quite young, whereas the writers are people in their 40s and 50s. That's why it's especially nice to see plays like "Hair" and "Godspell," which were written by young people, become so successful. It starts to open up the field."

Diamond said he thought the time set of "Brother-Hood," 1965, was a fascinating one to explore. "I didn't want to get into the 50's nostalgia rush and write another 'Grease.'"

"The 1960s are still too close to get nostalgic about and yet they were a fascinating, rapidly changing time. On one hand, Dick Clark was still going strong, and yet you had the Beatles coming over and freaking out a lot of people."

"'Brother-Hood' deals with a bunch of kids who are close friends and how a special attraction between two of them can cause a rift in the whole group."

Diamond said he hopes to continue writing music, lyrics and scripts. He added he is working on another musical but will "wait and see how this one turns out.

Arthur Bremer appeared in the public eye May 15, 1972, when he shot Alabama Governor George Wallace at a Maryland shopping center. Then, almost as quickly as he came to prominence, he vanished, overpowered by the rush of news.

In this short period we learned very little about the man who almost became the fourth assassin in our time. But a more complete picture can be found in part of his journal, published as *An Assassin's Diary* (paperback, Pocket Books, \$1.50).

The diary covers less than six weeks' time; the first portion is, in Bremer's words, "hidden and will preserve for a long time." But in the book, we can begin to see what drove him to follow Wallace, and before that, Nixon, across the country.

Bremer desperately wanted to be famous. He wanted a "T.V. entoroption in Russia or Europe" when he shot Nixon and he wanted to "shock the shit out of the S(ecret) S(ervice) men with my calmness." It also seemed the danger

element gave him what sexual satisfaction he had.

But Bremer was almost pathetically unequipped for the job. He accidentally fired one of his guns in a hotel room and used a war movie he found on television and the incompetence of the staff to cover himself.

In order to hide a gun from Canadian customs, Bremer pushed it so far into the inner structure of his car that he couldn't retrieve it. He also got lost several times during his pursuits.

Finally, a sense of failure began to overwhelm him. The format of the book precisely follows Bremer's entries, and several pages have only a few words printed in block letters.

One page says simply:
Just another god Damn failure

But this man, described by his acquaintances as timid and withdrawn, wouldn't be stopped. He is convinced his

diary will be among "the closely read pages since the Scrolls in those caves." And on May 4, last year, he wrote, "I've decided Wallace will have the honor."

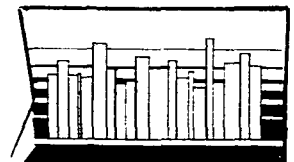
He never lists any political reasons for his decision. His only rationale seems to be that he makes "a big shot and not a fat little noise."

The last entry in the diary is dated May 13, two days before Bremer, wearing a red, white and blue shirt decorated with Wallace buttons, shot the presidential candidate.

A long introduction attempts to list the factors that set Bremer on the road to the shopping center, but few of them seem to be supported by the diary itself.

In fact, despite the insights, *An Assassin's Diary* leaves unanswered questions about the book and its author.

What can be done about people like Arthur Bremer, people who are convinced they must die to become famous and who write, "I hope my death makes more sense than my life?"



'Assassin's Diary'

By Bill Spangler