

is just like show business. You have a hell of an opening, coast for awhile, and then have a hell of a close."  
—Laura Ross

**ISN'T IT ROMANTIC** The idea was a winner. In response to what may have been history's first dramaturgs' contest—sponsored last fall by Actors Theatre of Louisville to fuel its recently inaugurated Classics in Context program—Felicia Londré submitted an ambitious proposal centering on the Romantic period. Declaring her project "outstanding," producing director Jon Jory awarded Londré, dramaturg of the Missouri Repertory Theatre, the \$1,000 prize—and the project is set to unfold throughout this month and next.

Just as Londré suggested, the Romantic festival will involve not just the theatre but the Kentucky Opera, Louisville Ballet and Louisville Orchestra as well, in a series of performances and ancillary events exploring the period from

**KIDDING AROUND** Adults play the roles of children in Donald Margulies's *Found a Peanut*, which recently had its West Coast premiere at the Back Alley Theatre in Van Nuys, Calif. Under the direction of Michael Arabian, Lycia Naff, Winifred Freedman and David Cameron were among the outspoken children who populated this offbeat comedy. *Found a Peanut* was originally produced in 1984 at the New York Shakespeare Festival.



Ed Krueger

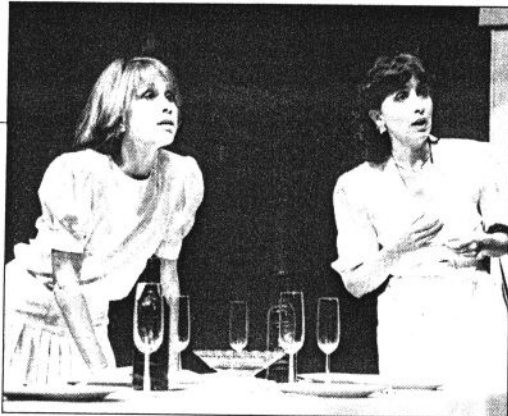
approximately 1770 to 1850. Specific production plans are still being cemented, but likely candidates for inclusion are Verdi's opera *Il Trovatore*, to be staged by the opera and ballet; orchestral works by Mendelssohn; and such plays as Alfred de Musset's *No Trifling with Love*, Alexander Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*, Jose Zorilla's *Don Juan Tenorio* and Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas*. Additional events under consideration are lectures by authorities on the art of the period, discussions on the relation of Romanticism to

current society, master classes, films and a citywide young people's poetry competition.

In announcing the festival, Jory explained, "The idea behind all of this is that works of art—and by that I mean all the arts—are inextricably tied to the period in which they are created. They are reflective of thought and ideas current during that period, influenced by what has gone before, impactful on what will come after. The festival gives us an opportunity to examine this interrelationship." Jory went on to call the banding together of the four local arts organizations "a unique undertaking that we believe will capture the imaginations of our audiences and focus additional, wider attention on our thriving arts community."

**SUMMER ENCOUNTERS** A two-character play performed by four actors and a Gorky classic were the first two offerings in this summer's mainstage line-up at the Williamstown Theatre Festival—and as usual, the casts were studded with faces familiar to fans of the large and small screen. Gorky's

*Barbarians*, right, led off the season in late June, featuring James Naughton, Ann Reinking and Maureen O'Sullivan. A. R. Gurney, Jr.'s latest work-in-progress, *Sweet Sue*, above, followed in July. Mary Tyler Moore and Maria Tucci played two aspects of the same woman, drifting into a summer encounter with a younger man (also played by two actors—Steven Culp and Barry Tubbs). The third mainstage play was Tennessee Williams's tale of desire and repression, *Summer and Smoke*. Meanwhile, at the Williamstown Extension, four new works bowed: *Hawthorne County* by Kenneth Cavander and Lou Berger, with music by Richard Peaslee; *The Lucky Spot* by Beth Henley; *Eleanor*, a musical by Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford; and David Rabe's newly revised version of *Goose and Tom Tom*.



Bob Marshak



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**ONLY THE LONELY** New York trend-spotters have been having a field day discussing the proliferation of solo performers currently or recently plying their lonely trade—from Whoopi Goldberg and Eric Bogosian to Spalding Gray and those special visitors, Dario Fo and Franca Rame. But the current rage for solo performance is not strictly an East Coast phenomenon, as the Magic Theatre's summer line-up so eloquently indicated.

Bill Talen, a solo artist familiar to Bay Area audiences for *The Shape* and *The Pre-Star Condition* (as well as a recent acting role in the Magic's *Angel City*), premiered his newest piece, *Cooking Harry*, at the Magic's Northside Theatre from late June through early August. A "poetic travelogue," the piece involves Talen's journey from an Iowa family reunion—where his favorite Uncle Harry tends the backyard barbecue—to New York and then the 1981 World Theatre Festival in Nancy, France. There, he finds himself on stage in a huge metal