

CRIT LIST

VALLEY COLLEGE

"Are You Now or Have You Ever Been"
Condition: Good

With the growing trend toward righteous conservatism and the false patriotism that is currently being displayed in our country, Eric Bentley's powerful play "Are You Now or Have You Ever Been," concerning the House Committee on Un-American Activities in the 1950's, couldn't have come at a better time.

His play directs its attention to the House Committee's investigation of the alleged communistic activities in Hollywood's film industry. While the play thrusts us back into history, there is also an uncanny and frightening feeling that develops as the play unfolds.

The feeling that maybe, just maybe, the unjust and blatant disregard for an individual's constitutional rights is not just a page from our history books, but in some respects reflects chapters that may be written today.

With fine acting performances from the entire cast, there were three exceptional must see performances.

Martin E. Brooks plays the self-righteous, Judge and Jury, defender of the "American Way," chairman of the committee with such zeal he'll have you convinced that you might be on trial next if you don't watch your step.

Allan Miller does an excellent job as Abe Burrows. He'll have you just as confused and bewildered as he had the committee.

And there is the performance by Thalmas Rasulata as Paul Robinson, a free thinker and a courageous individual for his time or any other. His character stands up against the facade of the House Committee, while telling the entire nation know he will not be forced to submit to these unjust hearings.

This is a fantastic and moving play for those interested in our history and the future of our country.

"Are You Now or Have You Ever Been" is playing at the Back Alley Theatre, 15234 Burbank Blvd., Van Nuys, through Sept. 16.

by Eugene Hernandez