

'Are You' to Head for Washington

BY SYLVIE DRAKE

Times Staff Writer

The Joseph Stern-Allan Miller-Kathleen Johnson production of Eric Bentley's "Are You Now or Have You Ever Been," a dramatization of the House Un-American Activities Committee's investigation of the Hollywood community of artists during the late '40s and early '50s, will open a second company of the show at Ford's Theater in Washington. It will begin previews on Sept. 19 and open officially on Sept. 22 and run through Oct. 26.

Actor-director William Devane, who staged the show here, will repeat as director for the Washington company, which will consist of a mix of new people and some members of the Los Angeles cast. Replacements for the L.A. production are currently being selected as the local staging will continue indefinitely at the Hollywood Center Theater on N. Las Palmas Ave.

Critical Acclaim

The pattern is not exactly the same as that of the Melrose Theater's production of "Father's Day," but close enough for comparison. Last year the Oliver Hailey comedy about divorce opened at the Melrose, a 99-seat-or-less waiver theater. It was seen by actress Barbara Rush, who put herself in the producer's seat and moved the show first to the San Diego Off Broadway Theater, then to the Huntington Hartford in Los Angeles. There it met with such acclaim that, after a preset engagement at the Arlington Park Theater near Chicago, the show returned to the Hartford for a second run. Subsequently, it also played San Francisco and Florida.

"Are You Now" opened six months

ago at the 50-seat Cast Theater on El Centro on a \$2,000 budget. The tight, topical production, which was of particular local interest since much of its trauma radically affected the lives of prominent citizens of this community, was greeted with critical praise for its power and professionalism—and a predictable rush for tickets.

Producers Stern, Miller and Johnson quickly realized they had a hit and needed a larger theater. Increasing their investment to \$12,500 (about 40% of which was contributed by members of the acting company), they moved the show to the Hollywood Center Theater in early April, where it has been thriving ever since.

According to Johnson, the show rapidly recouped its investment and 50% of it was paid back almost im-

Michel Legrand Signed to Score 'Robin, Marian'

Michel Legrand has been signed to compose and conduct the music for "Robin and Marian," a Rastar Pictures-Shepherd Production starring Audrey Hepburn, Sean Connery and Robert Shaw.

Legrand, an eight-time Academy Award nominee for his screen music, won Oscars for his song "The Windmills of Your Mind," from his nominated score for "The Thomas Crown Affair" in 1968 and Best Original Score for "Summer of '42" in 1971.

"Robin and Marian," a James Goldman screenplay dramatizing the adventures of Robin Hood, portrayed by Connery, and his romance with the Maid Marian, played by Miss Hepburn, also costars Richard Harris and Nicol Williamson.

mediately ("We held on to about \$10,000 as a cushion against operating costs which run about \$3,500 a week.")

Since April, "Are You Now" has played to 80% of capacity or better except for a two-week slump. (Breakeven point in the 183-seat theater is 70%). It has received considerable national as well as local attention.

Maybe New York

The Washington presentation will be a co-production by the local producers and Frankie Hewitt of Ford's Theater. Capitalization of around \$150,000 for the projected five-week run will be handled by Ford's, according to Hewitt. Stern, however, expects that the show, which was only staged twice before (at Yale two years ago and later at New York's Riverside Church, both times unsuccessfully) might go on to New York and even London. He credits Devane for its success in Los Angeles.

Going to Washington from the L. A. Company are Byron Morrow, Beeson Carroll, David Spielberg, Charles Weldon, Jeff David, Allan Miller, John Lehne and Tom Bower. They will be joined by Robert Karnes, Wynn Irwin and Ed Rombola. Local replacements expected to take over on Sept. 5, are Robert Symonds, Jay Varela, Joseph Bova, Sil Words, Howard Honig and William Burns. They will join Allan Garfield, Philip Allen, Jess Nadelman, Emmett Walsh, Irene Robinson, Marc Plastrik, Martin Sokoloff and Angelo Gnazzo.

Meanwhile, performances continue locally Fridays at 8:30 p.m., Saturdays at 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. and Sundays at 7:30 p.m. For information call 464-9921.

THE GRAND ADVENTURE OF THE YEAR





TELL US—Tense scene from "Are You Now or Have You Ever Been" to play in Washington, D.C.
Times photo by Mariana Damos

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