

Play With Top Cast Gains Guild Audience

— By Annona H. Kirkland —

Often vehicle requires a well-chosen cast. Theatre Guild has both in its current production, "Picnic" by William Inge is the lead of the cast and extremely able one, Rogelio Pretto whose professional performance of Hal, the drifter, belies the fact that it is only his second role as an actor.

It is his ability to play the same time the discipline and the willingness to go in the direction to perfection that he has of himself in all that he does. It all pays off in the most outstanding performances we have seen in years on the

Smith, as the lead, is natural in her role. The beautiful girl with all of the pressures in it from her mother is trying to get the advantage catch. She understands a lot of problems like a mother whether or not to that particular and Tamara as the plain, younger sister and an outstanding

the mother of the girls is Virginia made her local as Aunt Eller. "She comes with dual personality as she is experienced in theatrical work and speaking voice. It is a good stage. If she appears dramatic at times portraying a mother with the responsibility to go with raised daughters unaid-

We don't like to see people on their knees, except in church, and thought that the two scenes in the last act in which the mother knelt beside her daughter and in which Rosemary clung to the knees of her boy friend were overly melodramatic. To us their acting is sufficiently convincing without that gesture. But as we said, it's a personal hangup.

Bruce Quinn, who doesn't need us to vouch for his directing ability, has done it again, in company with Bill Gonzalez who is rapidly acquiring a list of successful productions of his direction to his credit.

The stage setting, surprisingly ample, sound effects and lighting all com-

Bennett at the Guild again. Her kindly presence, both seen and felt, throughout the play is the catalyst that makes everything turn out as it should. And don't let that transposed date in her program notes deceive you. Many of those who could qualify for the age don't like to admit it and those who can't, including Ann Bennett, certainly don't want 30 years added to their age. She's an up and coming actor person and a competent actress as she demonstrates once again in the role of Helen Potts.

Making her first appearance on the local stage is Joan Manfredo who comes with a wide experience in acting with several theatre groups in the States. Playing a small-town school-teacher she, and her two fellow teachers, played by Gail Goodrich Totten and Eugenia Bing, convincingly portray the restrictions placed upon the personal lives of teachers of that era in the community.

Ms. Manfredo has an opportunity to show the versatility of her ability as she ranges from a proper schoolteacher to a more than slightly tipsy woman, to a desperately frantic near-old maid about to lose her only chance at marriage, to an exuberantly happy bride-to-be.

Gail Goodrich Totten has appeared on the Guild stage previously as well as at Balboa High School and is quite at ease. Surprisingly at ease, although making her debut on any stage is the third teacher, Eugenia Bing. We'd like to see her in a more demanding role.

Sam Scribner as the boy friend of the beautiful daughter shows that he can do what is expected of him in a serious role although his ambition is to do comedy roles.

Someday we'd like to see Jim Dunworth playing Henry Fonda because for a minute when he appeared on stage as Rosemary Sydney's (Joan Manfredo's) friend, we thought that Henry Fonda had taken over for Dunworth, the resemblance was so striking.

He, Dunworth, is fine in the role of the small town,