UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS
AT THE
SCHOOL OF DRAMA

The Ecclesiastae
by Aristophanes
November 30-December 11
The Playhouse Theatre

Present Laughter
by Noel Coward
The Studio Theatre
January 25-February 5

Scenes and Revelations
by Elan Garonzick
The Penthouse Theatre
February 15-26

SCHOOL OF DRAMA

FACULTY

Executive Director, Sarah Nash Gates

Theory, Sarah Bryant-Bertal
Technical Director, Tom Burke
Design, Robert A. Dahlstrom
Design, William Forrester
Design, M.L. Geiger
Acting, Corey Hanson
Acting Robyn Hunt

Theatre History, Richard Lorenzen
Acting, Steve Pearson
Acting, Judith Shahn
Design, Deb Trout
Directing, M. Burke Walker
Theatre History, Stephen Weeks
Theatre History, Barry Witham
Theatre History, Jack Wolcott

RETIRED AND EMERITUS FACULTY

Jack Clay
M.E. Connois
James Crider
Vanick Galstaun

Agnes Haaga
Paul Hostetter
Robert Loper
Warren (Tyke) Loumbury

Geraldine Siks
Jack Sydow
Aurora Valentinneti

PART-TIME FACULTY

David Bouche
Jeff Caldwell
Bob Davidson

Mark Jenkins
Jeffery Eric Jenkins
Richard Jessup

Catherine Mc
Diana S
Scott Weldin

STAFF

Stage Technician, Bob Bohler
Master Electrician, Nacho Bravo
Stage Technician, Malcolm Brown
Office Asst., Sue Bruns
Stage Technician, Alex Danichik
Librarian, Liz Fugate
Costume Shop Mng., Josie Gardner
Administrator, Arlene Hamilton

Publicist, Denise Jarrett
Graduate Programs, Dorothy Kerst
Costumer, Laurie L. Kastuz
Secretary, Diana Smith
Production Mng., Anne Stewart
Costumer, Meri Wada
Scene Shop Mng., Alan Weldin

The Bear Facts

by Jo Carson

The Penthouse Theatre
56th Season
406th Production
November 16-27
1994

It has been proved that the land can exist without the country - and be better for it; it has not been proved that the country can exist without the land.

- ALICE WALKER
THE BEAR FACTS
-- for Bear #75 --

By Jo Carson

CAST
in order of appearance

Mr. Bear
BARry SHULTZ
Black Elizabeth
CRYSTAL ALLEN
Red Elizabeth
MARIsOL MEDINA
White Elizabeth
MELISSA CHRISTINE BAIRD
John Blackhawk
BILL KENNEDY
David Crockett
IAN BELL
Constituent/Soldier Bear
SEAN LYON
Constituent/Soldier Bear
KYLE STANLEY
The 100th Bear
DIANNE BROTHERS

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission.

THE PLACE is the West Tennessee woods, the hurricanes, the earthquake fissures, broken virgin forests and the like -- and the human settlements thrash among them.

THE TIME is the 1830's, more than twenty years after the New Madrid earthquakes tore up the territory and caused the great Mississippi river to flow backwards for three days. Andrew Jackson is president; the thriving plantation economy is resting heavily on the shoulders of enslaved Africans; what we now call Texas is a province of Mexico under Santa Ana; and the U.S. policy towards the Cherokee Nation has yet to escalate from "voluntary removal" to enforced migration and the Trail of Tears. Westward expansion and the War Between the States are just around the corner.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR
or... What's the Story?

The idea of authentic--or true--history is a powerful one. But the facts of history, as Richard Boyd Hauck points out in his essay, "The Real Davy Crockett", are not always as clear-cut as folks would like to believe they are:

Just as literary critics sometimes forget that their interpretation is not to be confused with the truth that lies in the text interpreted, historians sometimes forget they are, after all, storytellers. The problem also has to do with our natural tendency to forget that we are conscious creatures whose idea of reality is just that -- an idea of reality. In short, there once was a real Davy Crockett, but now his life can be retrieved only as a story. A story always reflects realities outside itself, but it is always a separate reality in itself as well.

In American culture, those stories which are called "histories" are invested with the authority of truth, while those named "legend", "myth", "tall tale" are considered concoctions of the imagination. As a culture changes, what has been considered "history" may come to be regarded as a fabrication--and a "legend" may gain the power of primary reality as it proves to express the needs, hopes, and desired values of the culture that imagined it better than the bare facts (ahem) from which it sprang.

The once bare facts of David Crockett's existence have evolved into stories which have set forth a persuasive ideal of American heroism, starting with David's own freewheeling, rambunctious autobiographies and continuing through the often viciously racist and sexist writers of "The Davy Crockett Almanac" after his death, to entertainers, politicians, warmongers, schoolteachers, TV producers...playwrights: the list goes on and the story and its uses changes with the teller.

The bear facts in this play are the stories which have been left out of the defining American legend/history that has been created from the life and times of David Crockett: the stories and voices which are rarely heard, which complicate and contradict the dominant cultural idea of the American Frontier Hero. As Jo Carson brings to life the separate reality of each character's experience and his or her telling of that experience, she gives us a new instrument with which to peer at our ideas of the past: not a telescope, which makes a single chunk of distant reality appear clearer and closer, but a magnifying kaleidoscope, which refractions that reality into a multifom set of perspectives.

And, while she 's at it, Carson gives us a dram good story of her own: a fabulist account of a historical tall-tale -- a magical-realist American fable. Its moral, if there is one, is an exhortation to be alert to the life-shaping power in how history is told and whose history is told: to listen to diverse voices -- the ones that are hardest to hear -- and to struggle to speak with your own voice.