

John Steinbeck's "Of Mice And Men"

By PAT TAYLOR

As polished and professional as it gets...this production provided a rewarding and captivating theatre experience. Superb performances by the entire cast and crew, as Steinbeck's classic story of two migrant workers unfolds.

On a beautiful and functional slanted woodsy set, (designed by John Iacovelli), we hang out in the bunkhouse, with an interesting assortment of agricultural hired hands.

First run on Broadway in 1937, the original cast included Wallace Ford, Broderick Crawford and Will Geer. Under the raw, realistic, yet extremely poignant direction of Frank



Photo by Jay Thompson

(l to r) Eric Allan Kramer, Tuck Milligan, Ralph Drischell, Marsha Dietlein and Hawthorne James.

Dwyer, this cast offered totally spellbinding performances! Effective lighting by Geoff Korf and period costuming by Donna Marie, also notable.

The two lead actors, perfectly cast, were LOADED with talent, depth, heart and soul. They worked together as if they'd been doing so forever, and individually, each did remarkable work as well. They are: Eric Allan Kramer as Lennie, the huge, hulking man with the mind of a child, and Tuck Milligan as George, the migrant worker who took him under his wing. Marsha Dietlein as the only female in the cast, sizzled as the lonely, sultry, wife of the boss' son, Spirit, commendable portrayals by Ralph Drischell as Candy, and John Michael Morgan as Slim. Other cast members included:

Dakin Mathews as The Boss, Jonathan Nichols as Curley, Martin Ferrero as Carlson, J.D. Cullum as Whit, Hawthorne James as Crooks, and Kevin, (a precious live canine, playing Candy's dog).

Presented by The Anataeus Theatre Company, from The Mark Taper Forum, this is an immensely gifted ensemble group. By the year's end, they will open a 99 seat playhouse in our NoHo Arts district, called "New Place Theatre." Watch for it! In the meantime, catch this classic evening of theatre... It should please even the most critical theatre goer.

Running Thursdays through Saturdays at 8, Sundays at 2:30, through August 25 at The Ventura Court Theatre, 12417 Ventura Court in Studio City. For reservations call Theatix, (213)466-1767 or (818)953-9993.