

8-4-1972

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### Recommended Citation

Lazenby, Walter, "'You Can't Take It With You': Play Shines With Theatrical Values" (1972). *Walter Lazenby Reviews*. 44.  
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## Play Shines With Theatrical Values

By WALTER LAZENBY

The sturdy theatrical values of George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart's "You Can't Take It With You" shine in the current production at Eastern's Fine Arts Auditorium, the last of the summer season. It will be seen nightly at 8:00 through Saturday and again on Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Director Jack Rang wisely chose to give the Depression-era farce a local showing, recognizing that after 36 years the play is not noticeably dated. It has perennial appeal, as a 1965 revival in New York and the present performances at Eastern demonstrate.

For older spectators, there is nostalgic appeal in the echoes of the Thirties. For younger viewers particularly, there is appeal in the theme which the story line supports, that the pursuit of material blessedness is far from being life's greatest joy, since, after all, you can't take it with you. There are topical hits against having to pay an income tax

when one can't be sure what his tax money will be used for. There is a boy-gets-girl story, although the lovers' dialogue at times sounds clumsy. And there is tight construction.

But mainly there is the inviting spectacle of a collection of joyful eccentrics blissfully doing their own individual things, not bothering about time and clocks, or conventional behavior, or making money. They are the inhabitants of Grandpa Vanderhof's household, each with his own kooky hobby or mildly insane preoccupation. Their stage antics in fact provide the effect of watching a three-ring circus, particularly when they are accidentally brought into juxtaposition

with two stuffy representatives of the Outside World.

In the local production, Libbi Johnson as Essie is a stand-out in that she seems earnestly to believe in her character, and Marcel Reid's acting as Donald has the same quality. Diane Byrd is a credible Penny Sycamore, but she does not measure up to her fine characterization of the mother in "Come Blow Your Horn" earlier this season. Similarly, Bob Entwistle, who gave the finest performance of his college career in "Come Blow Your Horn," lacks scope as Paul Sycamore to show what he can do. Ron Fortner interpreted Grandpa Vanderhof soundly, if understatedly, avoiding the pitfall of merely trying to imitate Lionel Barrymore, who created the movie role. Joan Forman faces somewhat more

of a challenge as the straightforward Alice, since the character has no eccentricity to capitalize on; but she rises to meet the challenge creditably after a low-key entrance.

As Tony Kirby, J. Sain brightens in his final confrontation with Bob Dodd, who gives a nicely controlled characterization of the stuffy Mr. Kirby. Joe Allison incorporates some telling gestures and good timing into his rendition of the Russian expatriate, Mr. Kolenkhov; but his inexplicably ad-libbed line at the end of Act Two rather spoils the climactic effect. Jan Bulla is convincing as the Russian countess, Olga; but more expansiveness in her acting would be welcome. Cyndy Williams plays commendably in the cameo role of Gay Wellington, actress. Others in the cast are quite adequate.

The set, though somewhat lacking in architectural logic, at least proves workable and includes authentic-looking details.