Joan of Arc: country girl makes it big

The Theatre Department will present the first play of the semester this Friday, Saturday and on the following weekend.

"The Lark," directed by Gerald Sullivan, is a modern play detailing in humor and tragedy the story of Joan of Arc, the country girl who saved France from the English in the fifteenth century.

The author, Jean Anouilh (a-nay-NEW-e) is an early entrant of the absurdist school of theatre. Both "The Lark" and an earlier play of his, "Antigone" deal with a young, naive girl with a grave sense of duty and a knowledge of her own impending death.

Anouilh, perhaps wrongly, "improves" on these classical historical lines with a modernistic touch, for instance the human side of Joan (Shakespeare never heard of it, although in this century there are dozens of Joan of Arc plays which treat Joan as a young girl as opposed to a sort of aggressive man-woman.)

One advantage of the modern author is his use of contemporary language, which seems to bring an old story closer than before.

The original text of Anouilh's is in French, but the bridge to English is very small, and the translation by Lillian Hellman is excellent.

It's a very funny play, as well as it is tragic and intellectually oriented.

Rehearsals, somewhat unusually, are running on schedule. As stated before, this is the first play of the semester, whereas usually a few Five O'clocks can be sneaked in before the majors (Not to worry, the Playroom will soon be in gear and Five O'Clocks and major productions will be able to run side by side all year.).

The short time allotment for rehearsal is an advantage, really, if the actors cannot have six months to perfect a play as they do in Europe. Generally, the next best thing is to do the play while it's fresh.

There will also be a matinee performance Sunday of the second weekend (Feb. 24).
‘The Lark’ coming soon

“The Lark,” a modern interpretation of the story of Joan of Arc will be presented by the Theatre Arts Department on Feb. 15, 16, and 22-24.


Instead of a chronological account of the life of the martyr/saint, “The Lark” opens with the trial of Joan and then examines the various episodes of her life that led her to sainthood.

All presentations, except for the Sunday performance, will begin at 8 p.m. The Sunday performance will begin at 2 p.m.

Tickets will go on sale Feb. 11 and reservations may be made by calling the theatre arts office at 581-3110 between 1 and 5 p.m.