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**Pitch
 In!**



entertainment

Drama dean now actor, too

By Susan Edwards

Two weeks before filming of *The Paper Chase* started in Canada, the supporting role of the steely Professor Kingsfield was still uncast. John Houseman stepped in for his first legitimate acting job and won an Academy Award in 1972 for his efforts.

In a New York Times interview last year, the 72-year-old Houseman said he had sensed that he could act, but nobody had ever asked him.

He is being asked to act now and will be seen in *Roller Ball*, scheduled for release in June. He also just finished shooting *Three Days of the Condor* with Robert Redford and Cliff Robertson in New York.

In a telephone interview from Juilliard drama department in New York, where he is dean, Houseman said *Roller Ball*, filmed in Munich and London, was a "very exciting, very contemporary film."

"As usual," he said, "I play the distinguished, elderly heavy—a representative of the establishment."

In addition to acting, directing and teaching, Houseman is the artistic director and founder of the New York City Center Acting Co., which will be in residence here March 18 through 19, and March 25 through 26 with four performances and workshops.

Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, William Saroyan's *The Time of Your Life*, and Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* will be performed in Kimball Recital Hall.

Houseman, who founded the company with the Juilliard School's first graduating drama class in 1969, said the troop was "a theatrical miracle."

Repertory theater, "the only living theater," provides the actors with the experience of playing the same part over and doing different plays before changing audiences, he said.

The actors must be constantly resourceful and not just personalities, he said. Juilliard trains its students to be flexible, to play musical comedies as well as the classics.

Juilliard training is more thorough than most theater schools, he said, and is similar to English drama schools.

Through auditions, about 35 students a year are accepted into the four-year program, he added.

The young company has very little turnover, Houseman said, although it continues to incorporate new graduates from Juilliard in addition to outside actors.

While in Lincoln, the company will give two workshops—one in vocal techniques at the Lincoln Community Playhouse March 17 at 8 p.m., and one in masks, in Temple 103 March 18 at 2:30 p.m.

"These demonstrations are a distillation of the work the actors have done over the four years at

Juilliard. It has stimulated a great deal of interest in the university drama schools," Houseman said.

While City Center was gathering outstanding reviews in New York and on tour, Houseman was directing the successful play, *Clarence Darrow* starring Henry Fonda.

He said he had time for everything except a sequel to his 1972 memoirs, *Run-though*, which was nominated for the National Book Award.

Run-though covers the years when Houseman organized, with Orson Welles, the Mercury Theatre in 1937, collaborated on *Citizen Kane* and the "War of the Worlds" radio show and produced the stage version of Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

It is a "time for a renaissance in radio theater," Houseman said. Enough people are interested, especially college students, but there is not enough material.

CBS's efforts, with the Mystery Theater last year, was inadequate to spark a revival, he said.

Innovative, experimental things are happening in England on radio and television, Houseman said, with radio being very active.

How does he find time to direct, act, write and teach?

"I love the whole thing—the entire business of acting," he said.

People who missed Houseman in *The Paper Chase* will have another opportunity when it shows at midnight Friday at the Stuart Theatre.



John Houseman, 72-year-old actor who won an Oscar for his supporting role in *The Paper Chase*.

Death by Hanging—crime study

This week's offering in the Foreign Films Series is Nagisa Oshima's *Death by Hanging*, an expressionistic study of nonexistent crime and its punishment at the hands of official policy in modern Japan.

Taking its inspiration from a 1958 news story, the film deals with the fate of a Korean who is accused by Japanese police of having raped and murdered a Japanese girl. Victimized by the prejudice that relegates Koreans to the place of

second-class colonials, the young man is subjected to a re-enactment of the alleged crime by the police, which ends up in another rape and death. Finally condemned in his innocence by a bureaucracy who must trump up crimes in order to provide self-justification, he is hanged twice.

Death By Hanging will be shown Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 3, 7, and 9 p.m., with admission by membership card.

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