



Our next production, *Horizon Lines* by Provincetown resident Deb Millar, opens Thursday, January 21 for two weekends at the Provincetown Art Association. This original work, directed by Robert Teague, focuses on the fears, grief and courage of three women who were or are wives of commercial fishermen.

Our fourth production of the season, set for April, will be a modern version of the Greek tragedy *Electra*. This play will be directed by Alexandra Hluchyj.



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# Provincetown Theater Company Inc.

In the Spring of 1963 the Provincetown Theatre Workshop presented its first production in the Parish House of St. Mary of the Harbor. The group had formed earlier that winter when some twenty local residents were spontaneously drawn together by their mutual interest in drama.

On the program that night was Chekov's "The Anniversary" and an original fantasy, "Circles in the Snow," by Workshop member Connie Black, a combination that presaged much of our future work.

From this quiet but successful beginning the Provincetown Theatre Company has grown.

The next winter we moved to the Art Association, built a stage in the store-room and produced two more original dramas. For the next nine winter seasons the group continued to write, direct and act in its own productions. They also produced a wide selection of plays from theatres all over the world, plus two original memorable revues on the theme "What to do in Provincetown In the Winter?" which brought the entire town to its feet.

In fact, being largely a group of amateurs, with several professional among them, the Workshop approach was the logical bridge to original work of new playwrights, and to classic theatre techniques for actors and directors.

In the Spring of 1972, newcomer Edmond DiStasi joined the Workshop and out of that experience he mounted his own vision of "Marat Sade." New

talent came to light. Exciting productions of "Three-penny Opera", "Promenade", "Alice in Wonderland", "Hot-L Baltimore", "Bus Stop", "Cabaret" and "Chamber Music" followed.

1978-1979 proved to be a creative season for the Provincetown Theatre Company, with world premiere of "Snapshots" by Ralph Fredericks, and "Eva Braun" written and directed by Charles Horne and James Bennet. A quartet of varied productions concluded the season.

In the past few years, fledgling playwrights have proliferated although we are short of directors and trained actors, largely because the "workshop" approach had been abandoned during the intermittent years.

Now, however, we are delighted to have become the recipients of a one-half grant from the Artists Foundation which will enable us once more to undertake a much needed workshop seminar in all aspects of theatre.

We must go to the public to raise the other half of the present grant and to help us find a permanent home where set-building and all other technical aspects of our art can be developed in a fulltime, conducive atmosphere.

We thank you who are here tonight and those of you who support our current program, but we need your financial help to refine our craft and to re-define our goals in giving the community the theatre it should have.

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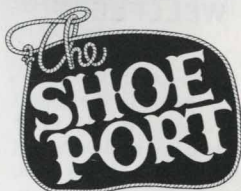
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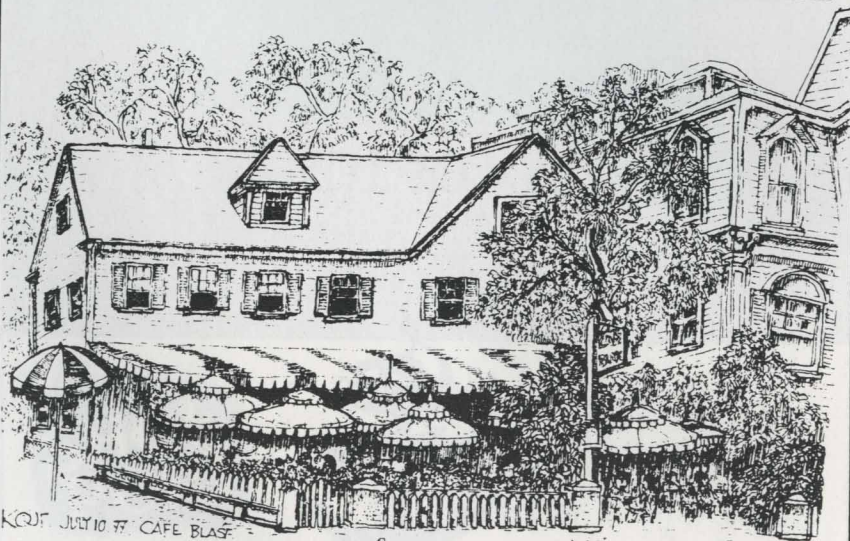
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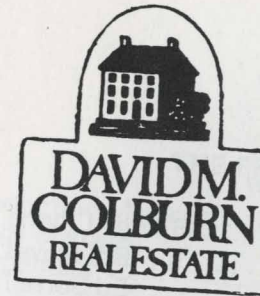
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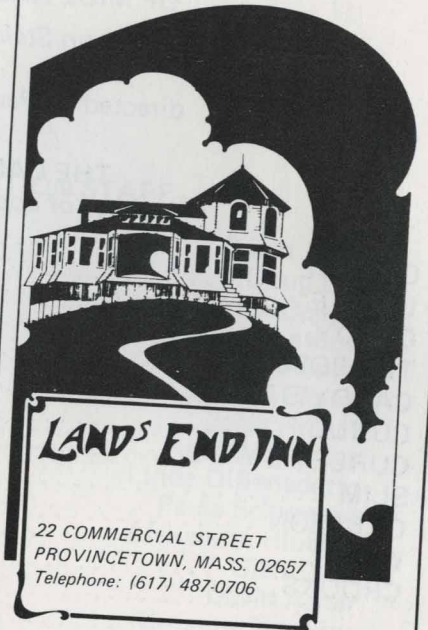
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# OF MICE AND MEN

*by John Steinbeck*

directed by Paul Asher

## THE CAST

*(in order of appearance)*

|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| GEORGE        | George Libone     |
| LENNIE        | Bill Meves        |
| CANDY         | Ed Sorrell        |
| THE BOSS      | Jules Brenner     |
| CANDY'S DOG   | Lhasa             |
| CURLEY        | Bob Henckel       |
| CURLEY'S WIFE | Nancy Gribbin     |
| SLIM          | Glen Lane         |
| CARLSON       | Gary Rooney       |
| WHIT          | David Asher       |
| CROOKS        | Ron Weissenberger |

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT I

Scene 1: A sandy bank of the Salinas River. Thursday night.  
Scene 2: The interior of a bunkhouse. Late Friday morning.

### ACT II

Scene 1: The same as Act I — Scene 2. About seven-thirty Friday evening.  
Scene 2: The room of the stable buck, a lean-to. Ten o'clock Saturday evening.

### ACT III

Scene 1: One end of a great barn. Mid-afternoon, Sunday.  
Scene 2: Same as Act I — Scene 1. Sunday night.

Time: 1937

Place: An agricultural valley in Northern California.

*There will be two ten-minute intermissions.*

## THE PRODUCTION STAFF

|                             |                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Production Manager          | David Asher                          |
| Stage Manager               | Doug Best                            |
| Carpenters                  | Patrick Calkins<br>Jerry D'Antonio   |
| Lighting Designer           | Donna Short                          |
| assisted by                 | George Libone<br>John Russell        |
| Lighting Technicians        | Ardis Markarian<br>Linda DiBenedetto |
| Sound Technician            | Paula Schuppert                      |
| Make-up Coordinator         | Alexandra Hluchyj                    |
| Hair Stylist                | Glen Lane                            |
| Publicity Director          | David Asher                          |
| Photographer                | Kristine Hopkins                     |
| Poster and Program Designer | Doug Best                            |
| House Manager               | Jamie Henckel                        |
| Costume Coordinator         | Paul Asher                           |

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Bill McNulty and the Board of Selectmen, Hornblower Guest House, Towanda — Fabric Art, The Moors Restaurant, Nelson's Riding Stable, Northern Lights Leather, Half Moon Bay Leather, Pilgrim Variety, Joy McNulty, Rachel White, Paul Richards, Earle Chaddock, Ray Wells, Stuart Bishop, Clare and the girls, Shank Painter Printing Company and all those not mentioned due to printing deadlines.

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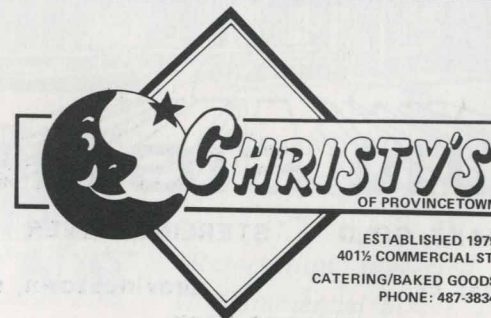
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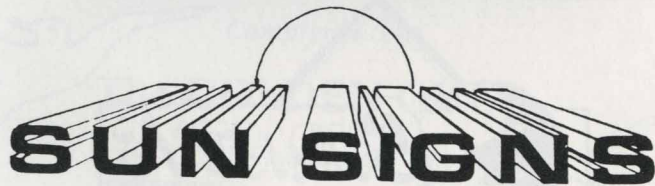




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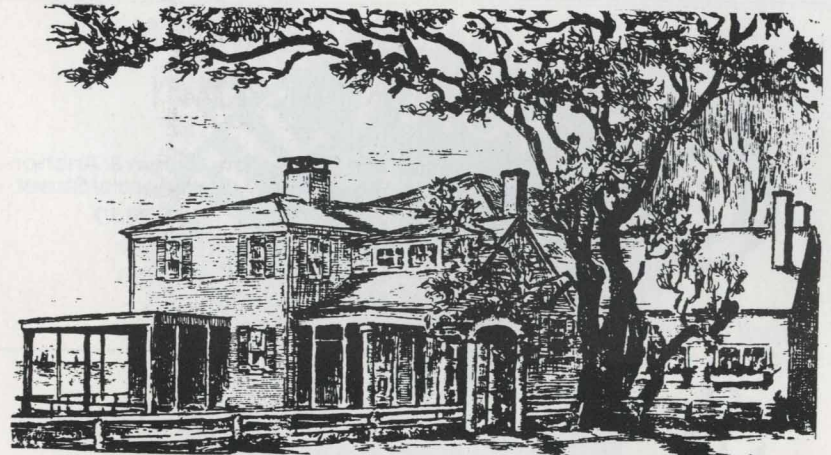
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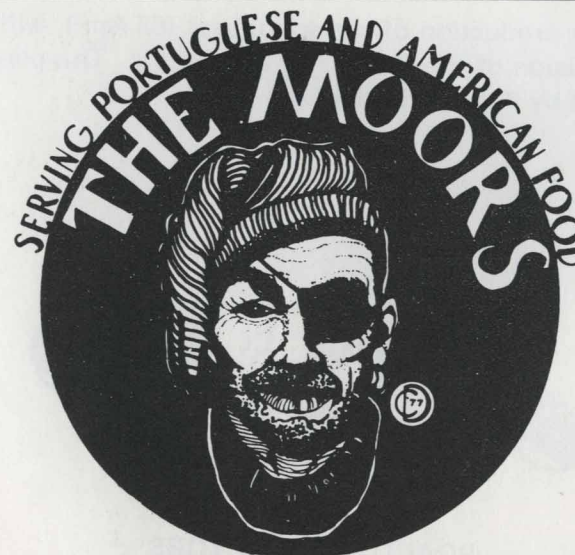
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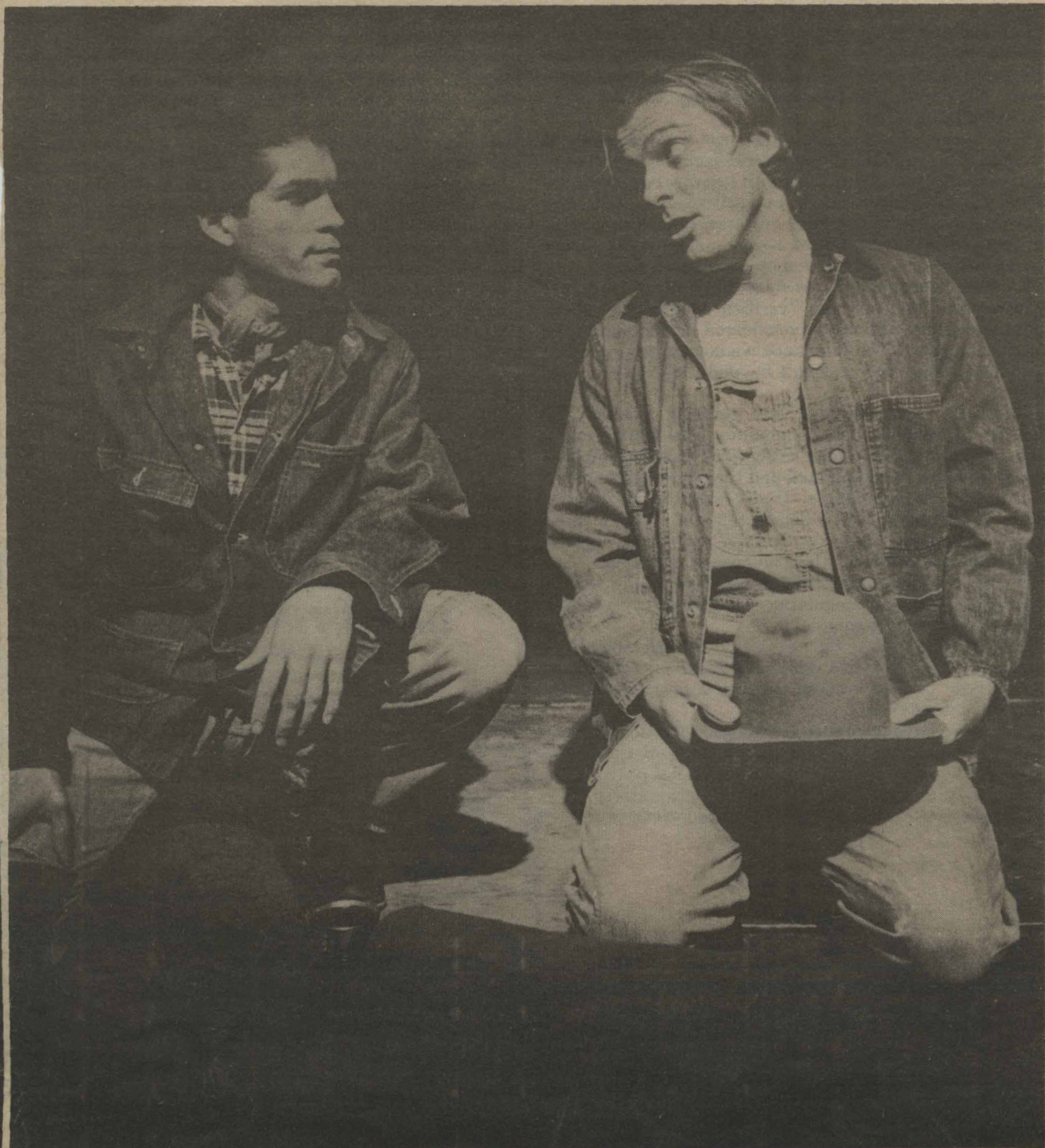
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SEE YOU IN APRIL



12/17/81

# 'Of Mice and Men'



George Libone as George and Bill Meves as Lennie in John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men"

Photo by Kristine Hopkins



# a riveting production

By Margaret Ryan

Despite a disappointing opening night turnout, the Provincetown Theater Company production of John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" proved to be rivetingly good theater, thanks to some outstanding performances.

Bill Meves, playing the pivotal role of Lennie, Nancy Gribbin as Curley's sluttish wife and Ed Sorrell, a newcomer playing the sympathetic, one-handed Candy brought an impressive array of talent to the Provincetown Town Hall auditorium Thursday night.

The play opens with Lennie, a large, well-meaning, albeit semi-retarded fellow, and his small, worldly-wise sidekick George (George Libone) on a California riverbank. The two actors are actually on the leaf-strewn lip of the freestanding stage, bathed in green light. Although the production uses no painted backdrops, only simple black drapes, the lack of conventional scenery is not intrusive or even disappointing. The audience must fill in the details, but at times this is more effective than conventional scenery, which is seldom as dependable as one's imagination.

George and Lennie are migrant farmworkers. It develops that because of Lennie's penchant for petting soft things—he's constantly admonished by George to throw away the dead mice he carries with him, after unwittingly crushing them—they are usually run off the farm after the soft things Lennie chooses to pet turn out to be the farmers' daughters.

Typically, this scene shows the audience what it can expect from the rest of the play. For if the actor playing Lennie isn't believable, the rest of the cast may as well cash in their chips. In this case, Meves lays fears to rest magnificently. His Lennie is not just mindlessly slow, he shows us the physical mannerisms of the mentally retarded: nervously scratching his leg and rocking back and forth whenever George berates him and jutting out his lower lip. His slackly hanging jaw and other facial contortions make it hard to believe this is the same actor who played the sophisticated journalist in John Russell's "November Twice" earlier this year.

Although it is generally understood that Lennie is a giant, and Meves is not physically huge, somehow the image of a behemoth is easily believable because through his slow, clumsy movements an optical illusion takes place. This is real acting, and Meves appears to have mastered more than a few tricks of his trade.

Libone's George, however, is disappointing by comparison. Saddled with a demanding role that requires subtle nuance to show the need beneath the scorn that George has for Lennie, Libone seems at a loss. He rushes

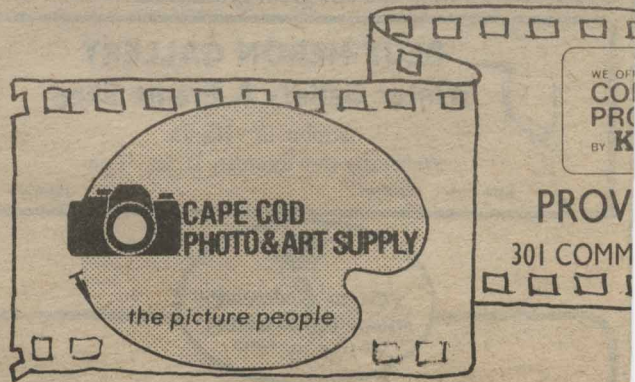
many speeches, making it difficult at times to understand him. Whether from nervousness or inexperience, his voice reaches the upper registers occasionally. David Asher (as Whit, the ranch hand) has a baritone that is relaxed compared to Libone's frequently screechy anxiety.

At the bunkhouse Candy (Sorrell) befriends the odd couple and joins them in their idealistic and poignant plan to buy a cottage with a vegetable garden where there will be plenty of rabbits for Lennie to fondle to death. It is evident that Sorrell has acted before; he uses pauses as eloquently as he does words. The tired cadence of the old man he plays rings true, and his calmness effectively contrasts, and thus heightens, the effusiveness around him.

Sorrell's acting experience was with the Dorchester Community Players, where he appeared in such plays as "A Delicate Balance," by Edward Albee, and Agatha Christie's "Mousetrap."

A former philosophy teacher at St. Anselm's College in Manchester, N.H., Sorrell moved to Provincetown year-round in September. He auditioned for the theater company to become involved in community activities. He was anxious to play Candy and luckily for him it was the only role left to cast. Luckily for us, too: Sorrell makes us

(Continued to Page 20)





# 'Of Mice and Men'

(Continued from Page 7)

feel not only Candy's horror but also our own horror when the evil Carlson (played with a properly menacing swagger by Gary Rooney) decides to shoot his dog, calmly portrayed by Doug Best's dog, Lhasa.

Curly's wife, also a victim of senseless brutality, is played with pigeon-toed sexuality by Gribbin, whose Joan Crawford fashions and nasal, whiny voice belie an intensity that makes her characterization really stand out.

"She was my dark horse," confided director Paul Asher, about Gribbin. The wife's tartness, so easily dismissed with ridicule, suddenly becomes a pathetic, posturing defense as she confesses to Lennie in the barn, "I don't like Curly. He ain't a nice feller," in that whiny sing-song that is somehow curiously affecting.

Gribbin brings a lifetime of theatrical interest to the stage. A childhood neighbor of the likes of Paul Newman and Mary Martin, she attended the American School of Ballet in New York and the University of Connecticut.

After the wife's misguided invitation to Lennie to touch her hair "to feel how soft it is," we not only share her subsequent ordeal, we actually witness it.

The sheer physicality of this scene almost overshadows the climactic ending. It is Lennie's ultimate "bad thing." (He constantly confesses throughout the play, as mice and

puppies go limp in his huge hands, "George, I done a bad thing.") The audience, which has built up a certain sympathy for the innocent, ridiculed man, becomes horrified at its own duplicity.

It is not only to Meves' credit that we are thus moved. Paul Asher's direction, especially in such key scenes, seems right on target. Though this is his directorial debut, he has acted in six theater company productions in three years, including last season's "Enter a Free Man" and "Beyond the Revolt of Mamie Stover." Asher said he was waiting to get away from the avant-garde plays and "British stuff" when Doug Best suggested "Of Mice and Men" as "the greatest play ever."

"There's so much beautiful stuff in it," Asher said, about the play. "It's really hard to go wrong."

Glen Lane as the muleskinner Slim, David Asher's Whit and Rooney as Carlson work well as an ensemble, providing the rowdy atmosphere every bunkhouse should have. Jules Brenner's bossman, though not a large part, lends the proper quiet authority to the proceedings. His maturity and deep tones are much appreciated. Bob Henckel as the sinister Curly, however, seem a bit light on the callous cruelty his role required.

Ron Weissenberger was a real curiosity as the "black buck," Crooks, a fellow victim Lennie is somehow drawn to. Weissenberger would be laughed out of Harlem—if he made it out alive, that is. His Crooks sounds more like Clarence Birdseye than a downtrodden black farmworker, despite the brown make-up.

The false notes in this personification make one wonder whether there are any black actors in Provincetown. Asher's remark that most of the cast was recruited makes one wish this recruiting had made possible the important inclusion of a black actor to play the role of Crooks. The symbolism and ultimate integrity of the play, in this respect, suffer through such careless characterization and casting.

The lighting, designed by Donna Short, and the sets, built by Patrick Calkins and Jerry D'Antonio, were attractive without being obtrusive. The simplicity of the production became an asset, proving, once again, "less is more."

The props and costumes, coordinated by Asher, were realistic although loans from local leather shops made the cast seem at times like the best-dressed cowboys east of the Mississippi. Gribbin's titillating frocks were perfect, as were her outlandish high-heeled shoes.

The Provincetown Theater Company has progressed from producing a one-act play for the entire season, a few years ago and now attracts talented artists in full-scale productions. Provincetown's heritage of theatrical excellence is not one to be denied, and the overall tenor of this production indicates that it will not be.

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At the current time, there are no plans for a reading or production of Of Mice and Men and the scripts are in the possession of the Provincetown Theater Company in the Provincetown Public Library. If there should come a time when the play is proposed for production, the Provincetown Theater Company will follow standard accepted procedure for obtaining rights and paying royalties.

Thank you for your kind patience in this matter.

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