

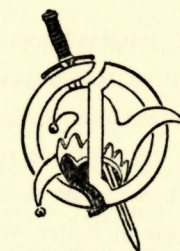




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Lewisburg Summer Theatre	

## CAP AND DAGGER



*presents*

## *The Serpent*

*a ceremony written by*  
JEAN-CLAUDE VAN ITALLIE

*in collaboration with*  
THE OPEN THEATRE

---

*Directed by*  
TREVOR F. LEWIS, II

*Set Directed by*  
R. STUART WHITE

*Lighting Designed by*  
JAMES D. LYON, JR.

*Costumes Designed by*  
RUTH P. BRINEN

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Bucknell University Theatre  
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

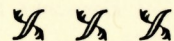
December 3, 4, 5, 10 and 11  
1970



## Director's Notes

"I no longer know the beginning. I am in the middle on a line between the beginning and a point toward which I chose to go." So the women of the chorus lament our plight. Eden, the Ideal, is behind us and ahead, who knows? The only certainty is that our present direction is a product of our past decisions. Those ideas and images which dominate our consciousness today have their origins in Eden. We go back there to explore the myth of creation for a clue to our present way of life. What is deeply engaging in the Genesis myth is the discovery that its assumptions are even today bases of a lot of the choices we make. Thus, there is a link between us and the Garden. We go back into the past, not to relive it, but to celebrate the present in the light of the influence of the past on man's experience today. What is life in the twentieth century like? Where are we at? What are the boundaries we are stuck at and how have they become fixed? *The Serpent* compels us to look at our lives and our experiences at this point in time - the now. What is the outcome of our exploration? Where are the answers? The ideas, the images, the questions are all there; we've raised them together, but only you can supply the connections. They are there too, in the dreams locked inside your head, and *The Serpent* is waiting to free those dreams.

T.F.L. II



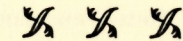
## The Song

By the light of the silvery moon  
I want to spoon,  
To my honey I'll croon love's tune.  
Honeymoon keep a shinin' in June.  
Your silvery beams will bring love's dreams,  
We'll be cuddlin' soon  
By the silvery moon.

## The Ensemble

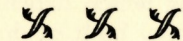
Joan Billig	Guy Biechele
Susan Crumpacker	Jack Blyskal
Leanna Dietrich	Skip Dorsey
Terry Ellis	Neil Hendershot
Lynn Haudenshield	Leslie Lagnese
Nancy Henry	Doug Melrose
Margaret Jones	Leslie Moonves
Dianne Powers	Marc Powers
Sally Ross	Barry Sapolsky
Helynn Schwalm	Chapin Wright

*The show will be performed without intermission.*



## Acknowledgments

Department of Music



## The Business Staff

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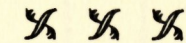
## The Style of The Production

In 1963, Joseph Chaikin, dissatisfied with conventional modes of expression in theatre, began a long term experiment in an effort to break new aesthetic ground. This experiment, known as the Open Theatre, was comprised of about thirty-five actors, playwrights, and directors who gave of their time and abilities without pay, working in the fifth story loft of an old building on West 14th St. The group flourishes today in the same loft with three widely acclaimed collaborative works as testimony to the success of their efforts. The first, *America Hurrah*, is three powerful satirical images of the national sickness, while the most recent, *Terminal*, is based on the group's meditation on death, the Last Judgment, and reincarnation. As Chaikin says, "It is about a conspiracy to make death relevant only to others, never to oneself, a conspiracy to concede that we all die. . . ." The second of their three works is, of course, *The Serpent*. The company has toured European capitals and American campuses or played without charge in its studio where spectators sit on mattresses or on the floor.

As their work requires an opening up to unknown possibilities through improvisation and collaboration, control is inimical to it. The form of their collaborative effort comprises the four-dimensional language of sound, gesture, rhythm, and silence. Probably the most unique element in their work is their commitment to collaboration. When the group decides upon a theme, Chaikin and his actors analyze it in all its ramifications, not only by lengthy discussion but also in concrete artistic terms. Through improvised attitudes and responses, they create the play as they go along, and establish form and content simultaneously, the one a natural outgrowth of the other. Out of this technique has come a kind of ensemble playing which depends heavily on quick transformational responses and a kind of play built of drastic images which are not held together by conventional linear devices.

Where and how do we start with a work as unstructured as *The Serpent*? Van Itallie and the Open Theatre provide us with a mere skeleton to which we must add the flesh. The text provides an open-ended structure which the actors use as a springboard; but the first steps of such a collaborative work are to simultaneously develop an ensemble feeling and a vocabulary of image and action. The method combines group discussion of the themes and ideas in *The Serpent* combined with more concrete game play and improvisation. In a university situation, restrictions of time necessarily limit experimentation and the director must quickly find ways to select the most cogent form among possible images the actors have introduced. It is of primary importance that the actors and the director remain flexible and quickly adaptable to change, where that change means enlargement of a particular image, or solidification of the essential impulse of a scene. As Van Itallie says, "the only criterion finally, of whether or not to follow an impulse in the piece was: Did it work for us or not, in our lives, in our thought, and in the playing on the stage."

## The Production Staff



STAGE MANAGER ----- Anne Swoope

CONSTRUCTION ----- Marc Feinberg

Eric Jones, Jeff Hickman, Mike Wise, Becci Nisley, Sue Firmstone, Stanley Webber.

STAGE CREW ----- Charles Landau

LIGHTS ----- Dave McKenna, Bob Drake

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SOUND ----- Charles Barber

PAINTING ----- Martha Weitzel

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