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Young actors form theatre troup

smart. Frustrated by the lack of 16 at Toronto's Palmerston opportunities to play truly Theatre. challenging acting roles, own opportunity.

Theatre, their own drama company, and are producing a dif-

They're young, talented and West, which runs March 29-April was also a student of Hindle.

Markham residents Robb Cook tors in a sense, who gained their and Murray Oliver created their first exposure to drama at craft. Markham District High School They formed Snake Song under the instruction of the late says Taylor. "The thing I ap-Ron Hindle.

The three recall that this drama department head, in his They're also home-grown ac- very pointed way, introduced them to the discipline of their

preciated most about him was Colin Taylor, the director of the that he was very demanding. He ficult Sam Shepard play, True upcoming True West production, never lied about the business, he never glamorized it. He would

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terior of the man who, nevertheless, or possibly because of "He was a very tough man," this intimidating manner, abilities.

Hindle's rare commitment to theatre at the high school level have absolutely no nonsense, that resulted in a number of promising students, themselves in-Herongate professionally. Barn "In a very real way what he ex-Dinner Theatre posed me to in his classes led me Mona Ed., Pickering Back By Popular

> speed. Cook and Oliver studied drama at the University of Guelph, while Taylor trained at the University of Toronto. Just last Christmas Cook and Oliver formed a partnership that resulted in Snake

direction I wanted to go," Oliver

his respect for you," Oliver says,

describing the often hard ex-

which was very unusual for Song Theatre.
drama in a high school."

They wanted to They wanted to produce quality "Sarcasm was a good sign of productions that placed them in demanding parts, and that's ex-actly what they've got with their production of Sam Shepard's True West.

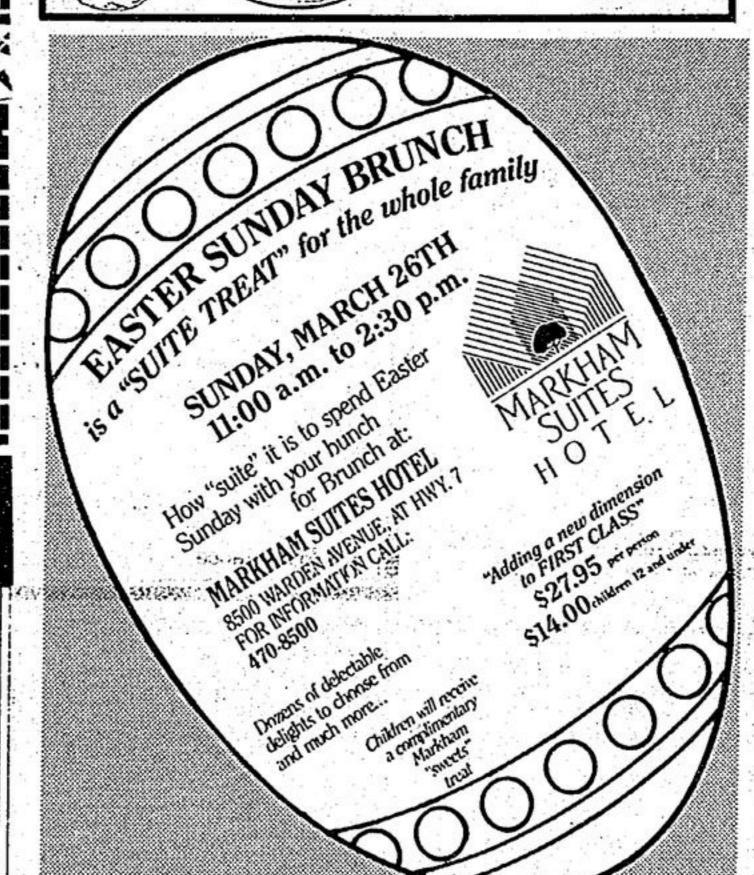
"I thought they were ready for motivated them to develop their a play like this," says Taylor, director of the one-and-a-half-The actors agree that it was hour production that involves four actors. "It's the perfect dramatic structure; nothing extraneous, nothing fat."

Taylor says his actors have the cluded, pursuing drama opportunity to focus on detailed work in this production, avoiding the technological trappings that sometimes detract from plays of to decide that acting was the a larger scale. He says the play is regarded by many in the acting community as a difficult one.

says. And this group is going full Set in contemporary Southern California, it centres on the relationship of two brothers within a family. Cook acts the role of Austin, the successful, educated, aspiring screenwriter.

Oliver plays his brother Lee.

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the petty thief. The performers sha say the play is a timely one. primarily examining the issue of the urban drive for success.

"It looks at who in the family, " consciously or not, was pegged as the one going to be successful and who was along for the ride," explains Oliver.

Although Shepard is known for 33 the obscure nature of his plays, 3 Cook says "this play is the closest to realism that he's done," - di

Taylor says the play is very funny and slightly disturbing and that "the audience will all get something from it." The actors and their director are also getting something from it.

They're learning different approaches to their craft and being stretched to the limit dramatically.

When putting together the True West cast, producers/actors Cook and Oliver say Markham's Bunty Webb became the obvious choice for the role of the mother. In addition to Markham Little Theatre, Webb has done film and commercial work, and brings to the play a wealth of experience.

Yet she lacks the stringent school training of her co-actors. Taylor says this difference in background will result in learning on both sides.

'We wallowed in method nonsense," he says of his university drama days, "so it will be worthwhile to work with someone with a different point of view."

Webb says she has a lot to learn, too. "I'm used to working with people at the Little Threatre who (act) as a hobby. But it's different to work with young people for whom this is their job and their life."

Not only have the two had to manage the business side of the production, but they are financing the play out of pocket. They have been able to acquire top technical assistance explains Webb, because of the quality of the production and the people involved.

Oliver jokingly recalls a saying of Hindle's which has stood him in good stead since his high school days. "If you didn't enjoy the screw-ups, we wouldn't do it live," it goes.

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