

Finally a film about the black experience in Vietnam, *The Walking Dead* premieres this week.

## Two Original Plays Premiere at UNLV

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STAFF REPORTER

The UNLV theatre department opened two original dramas, *Miss Sattie* and *Kissing Shadows*, at the Black Box Theatre on Thursday.

The opening selection, *Miss Sattie*, by UNLV's Cheryldee Huddleston, is a memory put to dialogue. In the course of 10 minutes or less the mixed blood descendant of a matriarch, Miss Sattie, describes a moment, both painful and joyous in Miss Sattie's life. Each character tells his story in relation to a beloved grandmother, mother, husband, son and daughter. Sheilagh Polk carried the role of the narrator with grace and dignity. And the supporting players were well cast with the exception of Britton Niles as the Bride. Niles needs to learn how to project and play a room. Staged like a masquerade, *Miss Sattie* lays the ground work for an introspective evening of theatre.

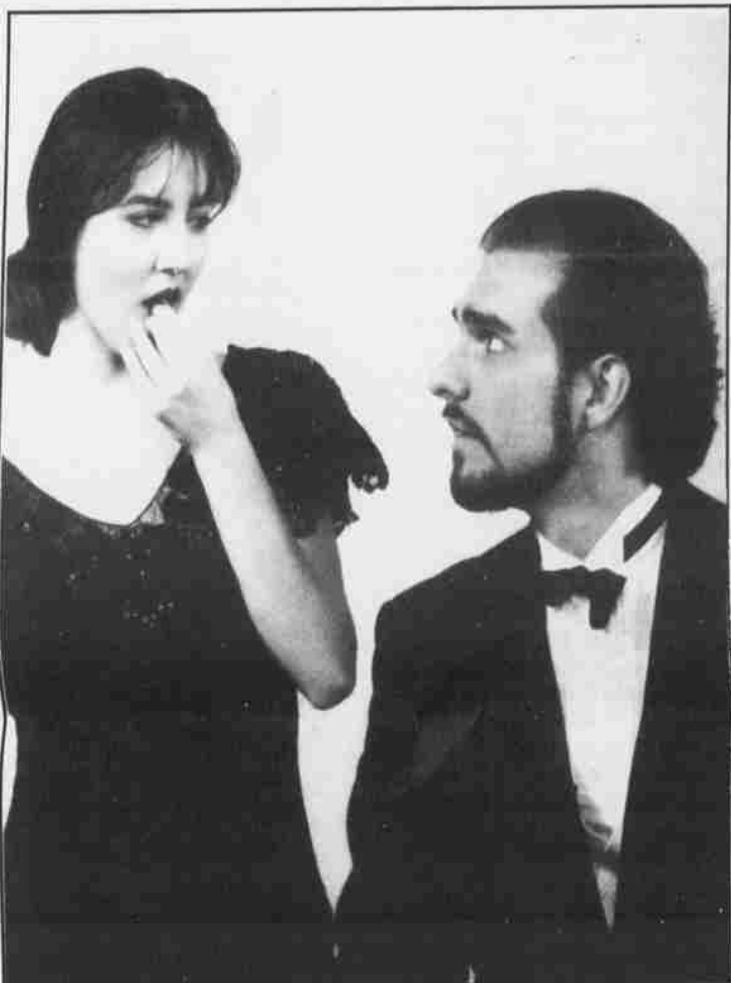
*Kissing Shadows*, the second selection, is an original work by UNLV playwright Jenny Laird. Laird, a second year MFA from Virginia, is currently an assistant in the Senior Adult Theatre Program. Her first play, *The Dock*, was produced at UNLV during the 1994 Spring One-Act Festival.

The production, *Kissing Shadows*, was inspired by the real lives of Anais Nin, and her father, Joaquin. It is a fictional account of a meeting between the two.

So then *Kissing Shadows* introduces us to two compelling characters, a man and a woman, in a word dance of love and hate.

As the play opens we see a young woman kissing her lover in the dark and bidding him leave before a person entering the room from another door discovers them. They are caught by the man entering but he does no confront the woman. He appears to be waiting for the right time to say something. As the play continues we find that he habitually waits to say things and some things have never been said.

The woman nervously greets the man, thinks she has not been discovered and begins to seductively shave him. The assump-



*Kissing Shadows*, starring Christie Zollar (l) and David Shamberger is showing at the Black Box Theatre through March 5.

tion is that they are man and wife. After he refers to her traveling husband we think they too are lovers. When she calls him father we find that they are parent and child. As the play unfolds Joaquin and Anais glide through all the things men and women can be to each other, advancing and retreating. Both fearful and enthralled by their desires, they tease each other then pull away making the next encounter a little more dangerous.

He tells her, "You are worse than a mirror." She tells him, "I felt something cold. then I felt your eyes." He says, "Have children if you want to create." She says, "You seem to have forgotten me." He, "You are reading with one eye." Anais and Joaquin come together an apart until the end of the play when they allow their relationship to make a final, critical choice that can not be undone.

*Kissing Shadows* is a wonder-

ful evening of theatre. The language of the play flows like the music Joaquin plays for his Anais. Christy Zollar as Anais and David Shamberger as Joaquin give excellent performances.

It is not unusual for educational theatre to cast young people as older people. In *Kissing Shadows* students are cast as Anais in her thirties and Joaquin in his fifties. This can be a long stretch for a younger performer but not in the case of this cast. The dialogue reads like a poem and the actors give it tinsion and slack at just the right moments.

Director Ann Marie Pereth is to be congratulated for directing a play much like a dance, with each move calculated and important.

*Miss Sattie* and *Kissing Shadows* play Thursday-Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Feb. 23-March 5 at the UNLV Black Box Theatre. Tickets are \$5.



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