Players Present Nemerov's Biblical Drama

By CLINT GOODSON
Thresher Staff Writer

The Rice Players, under the sponsorship of the Chapel Committee, presented a reading of Howard Nemerov's play "Cain" in the chapel on February 19.

The work is a dramatization of the Biblical story, the murder of Abel by his jealous elder brother, for whom the play is named.

Nemerov goes beyond his source, however, and attempts to define the relationships among Cain, Adam, Eve, and God. The result is a totally modern interpretation of the episode, one that is both intellectually intriguing and dramatically sound.

Talented Cast

Beverly Wehking directed an unusually talented cast that featured Bob Sculley as Cain. The villain of the biblical story becomes an identification figure for the modern audience.

He is the inquisitive mind that asks, "Why are things the way they are, Lord?" Sculley played him as a confused, but hopeful, young man who finally allows jealousy to overcome him.

And, the observer might say, rightfully so. For Abel is a sniveling punk who accepts the favor that God has shown him with arrogance. He accepts the order of the universe without thinking; and he assumes his good fortune to be a result of personal virtue.

Capture Intent

Roger Glade's reading of the younger brother was true to the playwright's intention. His expression was superlative and he succeeded in attaining the contempt of the audience. There was some humor involved in the reading, and Glade brought it out with spirit.

Adam and Eve assume significant roles in Nemerov's play. Adam becomes a figure of optimism and hope as he tries to show that the fall from Paradise was a fortunate event. And Eve evidenced the more realistic attitudes toward life that man must assume in order to go on living. Barry Mawer and Mary Strozier read these parts admirably.

God as Villain

Bob Stout, as the voice of God, sounded correctly authoritarian. Since he is punishing Cain, with whom the audience sympathizes, he joins Abel in the role of villain.

Dr. John Velz and Dr. Joseph Ward conducted a lively discussion after the reading.