

'SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY' STAGED:

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Little Theater Play Proves Unusual One

By EDWARD GRONBERG

The audience at the Little Theater of Jamestown's presentation of Edgar Lee Master's "Spoon River Anthology" at the Scottish Rite Temple last evening were put through the whole gamut of emotions as they responded to the subtle nuances of this unusual play.

Charles Aidman adapted and arranged Master's sometimes tender, sometimes vicious, many times comic portraits of the people he observed in Spoon River, Ill. It is a cannily selected succession of cameos, and the Little Theater production realizes full value from all standpoints.

Most plays permit an audience to become involved, and sometimes identified with a limited number of characters. But in this play there are some 80 odd people.

Since Master has limned people from all walks of life, there's something for everyone in the show. Or, more properly, everything for everyone.

Since all the people in "Spoon River" are dead, and come from their graves to tell their stories...the setting is black and the actors are black-costumed. The stage is in darkness save for spotlighting of the characters. This entails 70 light cues which were impeccably handled by Jean Ekwall.

The acting last night was just fine. Carol Lewis has just about the greatest variety of characters to perform, and she does an excellent job.

James Pierce, a most capable actor, ranged through his many personages with authority and gusto.

Dave Ebersole was well

received in the more juvenile parts as was Kathryn V. Smith in the ingenue ones. Commendable performances here, too.

Aiding the action, is music selected by Mr. Aidman, some with his own lyrics. This facet of the production was in the sensitive hands of Alice Jean Hoffman who with the help of Roger Gates did a superb job of heightening the show's effect. They won spontaneous and well-deserved applause from the audience.

Paul Weinbach directed with a sure and knowing hand and certainly Helen Merrill and Kathy Neubeck are to be mentioned for their work in costuming.

To accommodate the largest Little Theater membership in years, 10 performances will be given. Next week's schedule calls for shows every night but Wednesday, with two performances on Saturday.

This is the final play by the Little Theater at the Scottish Rite Consistory. And it is fitting that it should be one of their finer shows.