The
University of Tennessee
Theatres Present

NOVEL CONCEPTS CHALLENGE

March 28 — April 12

The University of Tennessee Theatres
A Division of the Department of
Speech and Theatre within
The College of Liberal Arts
presents

MOTHER COURAGE AND HER CHILDREN

By Bertolt Brecht
With Music by Paul Dessau

Directed by Thomas Cooke
Setting and Lighting by Barry Daniels
Costumes by Marianne Custer
Musical Direction by Marian Hampton
Orchestra Directed by Jane Burke

There will be one fifteen minute intermission.

The taking of photos and the use of recording devices in this theatre are strictly prohibited. In the unlikely event of a fire, please exit through the passages through which you entered; they have been checked and are clear exits in case of an emergency.

Mother Courage and Her Children March 28-April 12, 1980 The
Clarence Brown Theatre.

CAST

In order of appearance

The Sergeant	Bob Shaw
The Recruiter	Hugh Sinclair
Mother Courage	Sue Carol Perry
Eilif	David Sexton*
Swiss Cheese	Kerry Weeks
Katrin	Sheira Freedman
The Cook	Chris Brown
The General	Bill Martin
The Chaplain	Gerry Duffin
The Ordnance Officer	Hugh Sinclair
Yvette Pottier	Carolyn Popp
Man with a Patch Over His Eye	Rusty Coppenger
Sergeant	Greg Baker
The Colonel	Bob Shaw
The Captain's Clerk	Rusty Coppenger
Young Soldier	David Thompson
Older Soldier	Bob Shaw
1st Soldier	Greg Baker
2nd Soldier	Fred Fehrmann
Peasant Woman	Kathrine Goodall
Peasant Child	Julia Clebsch
Off Duty Clerk	Tom Gillespie
Young Man	Tom Gillespie
The Old Woman	Barbara Lea Weaver
Soldiers with Eilif	Greg Baker, Fred Fehrmann
Peasant Woman (Song of Shelter)	T.R. Morgan
The Lieutenant	Hugh Sinclair
1st Soldier	David Thompson
2nd Soldier	Fred Fehrmann
Peasant Man	Bill Martin
Peasant Woman	Gretchen Burleigh
Peasant Son	Mike Tweed
Peasants, Soldiers, and Musicians	Carl Wittenberg, Jane Burke (piano), Ruthie Barber (flute), Tim Miller (Trumpet), Rusty Coppenger (Harmonica), Barbara Lea Weaver (Recorder), David Sexton (Guitar), T.R. Morgan (Accordion), Gretchen Burleigh (Recorder).

*David Sexton appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity.

PRODUCTION STAFF

STAGE MANAGER KITTY NORTON
ASSISTANT TO MS. NORTON DEBORAH HAYES
SOUND DESIGN BY GREG LAWSON
J.K. WAGENBLAST
MASTER CARPENTER BILL SAVAGE
LIGHTING BOARD OPERATOR DONNA DALLAS
SOUND BOARD OPERATOR J.K. WAGENBLAST
MASTER CUTTER BILL BLACK
PROPERTIES ROXANNE ASHE
GRETCHEN BURLEIGH
SET CONSTRUCTION DEBORAH BECK
GRETCHEN BURLEIGH
GARY HARRIS
JIM LEITANKER
DAVID MALVIN
JEFF PULLIUM
STACEY SHELBY
CINDY SILER
ELECTRICS CREW STAGECRAFT 2221
PROPERTIES RUNNING CREW TROY MASTERS
BRUCE STANLEY
COSTUME CONSTRUCTION MARGARET REESE
MARI DECUIR
MANUA FAYE MIDGETT
HOLLY JONES, SONYA BRADFORD,
KATHY HAVERKOS, SUSAN LANEN,
FLOOR ELECTRICIAN JAYNE BERLINGER
HOUSE MANAGER DAVID MALVIN

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

MARY JANE HARVILL, BOB COTHRAN, L.J. DECUIR, BILL WILSON AND THE DEPARTMENT OF TELEVISION SERVICES IN THE DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION, FRANK A LESTER, DIRECTOR; WALT MARTIN AND WBIR, EMILY CLARK AND WTVK, DEAN WASSON AND WATE, RADIO STATIONS WRJZ, WUOT, WEZK, WBIR AND WKGN, CARPET WORLD, DAVIS CARPETS, DOUG MOKAREN & U.S. ARMY RESERVE

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO DR. JOHN C. OSBORNE FOR HIS ASSISTANCE WITH THE TEXT.

About *Mother Courage and Her Children*

by Dr. John C. Osborne

Professor of Germanic and Slavic Languages
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Mother Courage and her Children is the first and perhaps the finest of the five dramas which make up Bertolt Brecht's mature work. It contains flashes of the mordant and incisive wit which marked such works from his first period as *Baal*, *A Man is a Man*, and *The Threepenny Opera*, but none of the arid didacticism which marred the "teaching plays" (Lehrstücke) of his middle period. And in *Mother Courage* he refrains from using the more drastic "alienation devices" (Verfremdungseffekte) with which he had experimented earlier and employs only announcements of the action to come, songs, and gestures—devices which he now has completely under his control and which contribute to rather than distract from the action. Like his earlier works, *Mother Courage* contains sometimes vicious attacks on war, religion and the church, and what Brecht conceives to be the capitalistic ethic, and like all his mature works it is meant to demonstrate that Marxism is mankind's only viable philosophical choice.

Mother Courage was an immediate success and did much to establish Brecht as a major force in modern drama, but Brecht himself was dissatisfied with the way the play was received at its world premiere in Zurich in 1941. The role of Mother Courage was created by the incomparable Therese Giehse, and when in the last scene Mother Courage, alone and friendless, pulled her sutler's cart off "to get back to business" there was hardly a dry eye in the house, so touched was the audience by this courageous old soul who despite one setback after another simply refused to give up. Brecht was mortified. The audience had misunderstood his play. He then made revisions in order to make it clear that Courage is not an indomitable woman who must be admired for her perseverance in the face of adversity, but a greedy businesswoman whose shortsightedness leads to the death of her children and whose actions deserve not praise but censure. Of course, this was not the first time, or the last, that Brecht found himself grossly misunderstood. Those wealthy folk who were delivered in their limousines to performances of *The Threepenny Opera* and who chortled with delight at the deeds and misdeeds of Mac the Knife and friends obviously failed to understand that Brecht was attacking them, that he was trying to point out that there is no difference between the capitalist and the common criminal. And in 1948, at the world premier of *Mr. Puntila and his Hired Man Matti* in Zurich, Brecht was visibly perturbed when he strode on stage after the world premiere to receive a long ovation, for the audience had been enchanted by Puntila, the capitalist, and slightly bored by Matti, the proletarian. Theatregoers were willing to forgive Puntila, as played with true comic genius by Leonhard Steckel, for his reprehensible behavior whenever he was "suffering from an attack of sobriety" because he was so utterly endearing when he was "suddenly taken drunk" and displayed wit and charm and a total obliviousness to all class distinctions.

In order to understand *Mother Courage* and Brecht's other mature works as he wished them understood, it is necessary to keep in mind his theories on "epic non-Aristotelian theatre" and the view of mankind on which they are based. In his theoretical writings Brecht emphasizes that whereas conventional theatre, in

keeping with Western tradition, portrays human beings as immutable, incapable of radical change, epic theatre presents them as "alterable and undergoing alteration." Mankind, Brecht contends, has changed basically in the past and can, indeed, must evolve in the future to a state of complete rationality. After all, in a completely rational world there would be no war, no vice, no oppression, economic or otherwise. And, as Thomas Mann pointed out, there would be no art either; but that does not seem to bother Brecht, who sees his epic theatre as a means of bringing about that brave new world. While conventional theatre appeals to the emotions, seeks to involve the playgoer in the action, and reinforces irrational behavior, epic theatre appeals to the intellect, compels playgoers to remain objective observers, and "forces them to make decisions." The alienation devices, of course, are meant to keep the audience objective, to focus attention not on what happens, but on how and why it happens. Brecht wants us to pass judgment on Courage's actions. Conventional wisdom has it that Brecht succeeded as a playwright because he failed to put his theories into practice, but such a view ignores the fact that Brecht's ultimate aim was to make his audience think. The UT performance of *Mother Courage* affords us the welcome opportunity to judge for ourselves whether Brecht has succeeded in making us ponder on problems it might be more pleasant to ignore.