

Harold Clurman: Professors and Friends

Place: The Hunter College Playhouse and the reception area of the new Jacqueline Grennan Wexler Library (at that time still unfinished and unnamed).

Date: May 15, 1983.

Occasion: Celebratory. We celebrated Harold Clurman—director, critic, author, producer, raconteur and, from 1967 to 1980, a professor of theater at Hunter College. And we celebrated the announcement of the first Harold Clurman Professors—director Robert Lewis, playwright Arthur Miller, and producer-director Robert Whitehead.

When he initiated the fund drive to establish the Clurman Professorship, Edwin Wilson, then chair of the department of Theater & Film, wrote: "It will bring to Hunter College people who are experienced in the two areas Harold himself combined so well: the professional theater and scholarly achievement." It really will. Lewis, Miller, and Whitehead are all to teach at Hunter College this year.



Roy Scheider and Zoe Caldwell sit below Al Hirschfeld's elegant caricature of Clurman, who always appeared at opening nights with cane and cigar. (The stage setting was designed by Harry Lines of Hunter's Department of Theater and Film.)



The legendary actress and teacher Stella Adler opened the evening's program by reading her introduction to the new edition of Clurman's *The Fervent Years*. She is pictured here with the actor Jack Garfein, now artistic director of the Harold Clurman Theater on 42nd Street, and President Shalala.

World-famous as a founder of The Group Theater, one of the most important experiments in the history of American theater, Harold Clurman had among his many directing credits *Awake and Sing*, *Golden Boy*, *A Member of the Wedding*, *The Autumn Garden*, and *A Touch of the Poet*. He was, in addition, theater critic for *The Nation* from 1953 to his death in 1980, the author of seven books, and a producer (*All My Sons* for example). And as the video-film* that concluded the program proved over and over, Clurman was a man passionately committed to the belief that theater and life are one.

"Life's a losing game," he said in the film, "so you might as well enjoy it. But what *fun* this flop is!"

**Harold Clurman: A Life of Theater* produced and directed by Thomas Klein and Alan Kaplan.

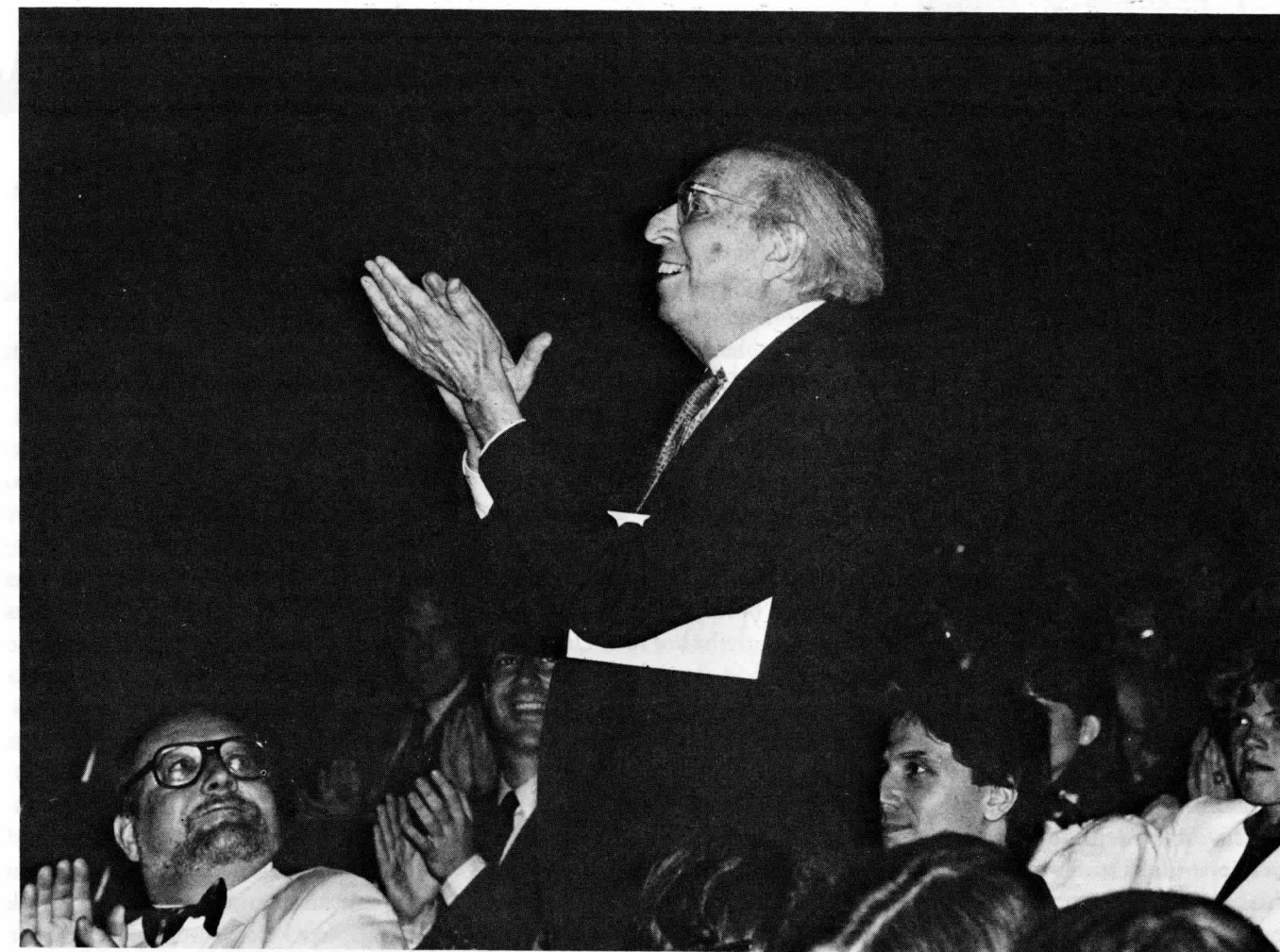


(above) Joseph Wiseman, Colleen Dewhurst, Zoe Caldwell, and Roy Scheider read selections from the writings of Harold Clurman from the stage of the Playhouse.

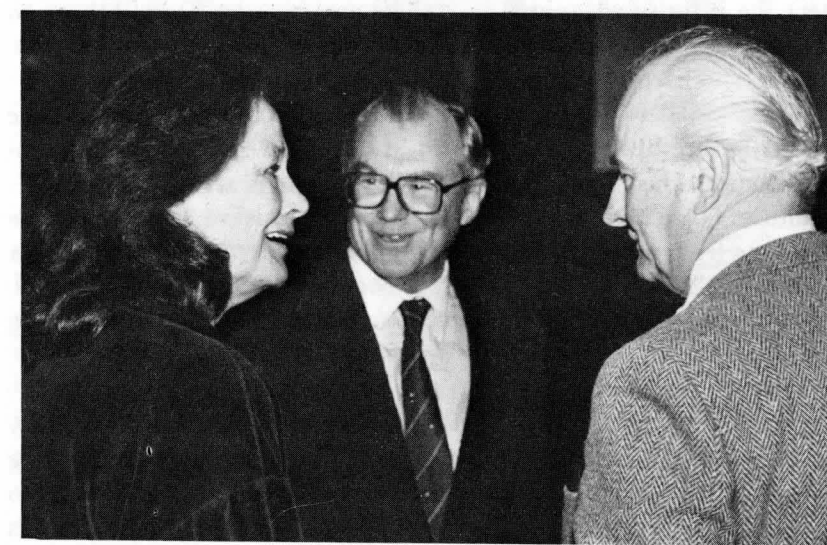
(top right) Among the guests were Marian Seldes, actress and writer, and the screenwriter and playwright Henry Ephron, whose late wife and writing partner, Phoebe, graduated from Hunter. Mr. Ephron established a scholarship in playwrighting at the College in 1981.

(center) Standing on one of the bridges that link the new Hunter towers are Clurman celebrants Tamara Green, chair of the Classics Department, Tilden LeMelle, acting provost, and Vera Mowry Roberts, professor of theater and founding director of Hunter's Junior Year in New York program.

(bottom) With her husband George Kupchik, director of the Environmental Health program in Hunter's School of Health Sciences, is Arthur Miller's sister, the actress Joan Copeland.



(above) While studying theater in Paris in the early Twenties, Clurman shared an apartment with a young music student who proceeded to become a lifelong friend: Aaron Copland, shown here acknowledging his many admirers.



(left) Colleen Dewhurst, Edwin Wilson, who arranged the evening's program, and Robert Whitehead, the distinguished producer who will hold one of the Clurman Professorships this year. (In addition to teaching at the College, Wilson is theater critic of the *Wall Street Journal* and president of the Drama Critics Circle.)