Casting is one of the most difficult parts of job

THIS GENTLE, almost pixyish man declared, "There's a straightforwardness and down-to-earth attitude about people in the Midwest that I really respect." He laughed softly, "I lived very many years in Hollywood."

Asked to name the all-time bit shows during his years at Meadow Brook, Kil-burn said, For me, a landmark play was The Cruchte' by Arthur Miller, done in 1970, the first bot of the artistic diretor. It really toot of the was the way the audience responded, they didn't just want light fare. He said that for each year you'd almost have to plet two hits, one artistically exciting and the other a commercial success. Through the seasons these have in

cial success.

Through the seasons these have included 'The Andersonville Trial' in 1971, 'Inherit the Wind' and 'Pracula' ('à huge popular hit') in 1972, 'As You Like It' in 1973, a musical version of 'Tite Drunkard' in 1974, 'Witness for the 'Prosecution' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in 1975, 'Man and Seperman' in 1976, once of note in 1977, 'Devil's Disciple' and 'Ring

Round the Moon" in 1978.

More are "Charley's Aunt" in 1979
and 1980 ("Charley's Aunt" and "Christmas Carol" are probably the two biggest hits. "We had sinading room coly
for almost every performance.", "A
Summer Remembered" in 1979 ("A
new play, by Charles Nolte. It appealed
to the middle-west audience. People
still ask me about that.", "Another
Part of the Forest' in 1980, "Othelio"
and "On Golden Pend" in 1981, "A
Christmas Carol' in 1982, and 1983 and
"Cyrano de Bergerac' and "The Dining
Hoom" ("a surprise success"), also in
1983.

SINCE ARRIVING at Meadow Brook, Kilburn has appeared as a performer only in "Ab, Wilderness!" - the second play he directed. The actor who was orginally cast got a role in New York, and Kilburn stepped into the part. He found directing and playing in the abow a heetic experience.

He also has filled in temporarily when an actor couldn't appear, due to sickness or injury. "It's not something I like to do," Kilburn said. In all in-stances, it was with plays he directed.

MEADOW BROOK has featured many well-established performers in its productions and some unknowns who later won acclaim as stage, TV and movie stars. Favorites at the theater have included Booth Colman, Jeane Arnold and William Le Massena. Of Le Massena, Kilburn said, "He was a stalwart in the early days. Then he was in the long-running hit 'Deathtrap' five years on Broadway and came back after that. He worked for minimum while we were building up."
Kilburn said the Massena likes the lifestyle Meadow Brook offers, with opportunity for hiking and relating in the salurban, countrylike atmosphere. Actions on camputation table, big mobile to the companion of the comp MEADOW BROOK has featured

"A DROP OF energy that makes a performance come alive is what goes on between actors on stage. A good di-rector can only lead them to it," be

said.

Kilburn considers casting one of the most difficult parts of his job. Often there are several actors he would be happy to see in a particular role, but none of them is available at the time.

For "The Little Foxes," he had three or four actresses in mind for the role of Regina but couldn't get any of them.

Regina but couldn't get any of them.

He cast actress Polly Holliday 'on her reputation only. We had never met.' Not long after, she became a smash hit as the waiters Flo on TV's "Allee."

For Shaw's 'Man and Superman, 'Kilburn was having difficulty casting the leading character, Jack Tanner.

The part is often played by an actor much too old, he sald Kilburn went to New York, auditioned a number of actors, none of whom was right.

'The play is about the life force. The last person walked in for the audition, and he tooked like the life force.' That's how Kilburn cast William Hurt, who has since become an immensely

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IN 1895, Kilburn was teaching at UCLA. When he came as guest director to teaches Brook, Fernald asked him to Meadow Brook, Fernald asked him to the cadenty of Dramutic Art, which was campus. "Seven years ago, it became too expensive to continue the academy so it was phased out," Kilburn said. "We were very sorry."

Economics is niways a tough part of planning for the future in Meadow Brook's enterprises. Kilburn hopes someday to establish a second theater,

erhaps a small 70-scat one, where ex-erimental plays would be produced. He also would like to see a return to

He also would like to see a return to a more extensive touring season for Meadow Brook shows that go to small towns and communities throughout the state. State funding for the tour, which started in 1974, has been cut, and the tour went from three weeks down to five days, up to two weeks last year. Meadow Brook Teatire seats 608 patrons in an attractive auditorium with good sightlines. General admission tickets are \$10 for a Wednesday mattnee, \$11.50 the lowest evening price and \$14 tops for Saturday night.

We have a very lively and intelligent audience, Kilburn said.



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The University of Detroit Clarkston Campus at Colombiere will present its second annual "Authentic Renaissance Feast" at 7 p.m. Saturday at an obtdoor wooded site on the center's grounds. Held in conjunction with the ongoing Michigan Renaissance Festival at Colombiere, the court banquet will be prepared and served in the manner of a real castle banquet of the medieval era. Cost of the evening is 475 per person and includes tickets to the Michigan Renatssance Restlval. Tomfoolery will be led by the mischievous Gib-bon the Troubadour, assisted by members of the U-Gircus acts coming to Detroit

The 113th annual edition of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Balley Circus will present 17 performances beginning Friday, Sept. 28, and continuing through Sunday, Oct. 7, at Joe Louis Arena in down-through Sunday.

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