By David J. Maurillo

Jean Genet's The Blacks, produced by the Theatre Company of Boston and The New African Company at Harvard's Loeb Theatre, is a disappointment, for it promises more than it ever becomes.

Directed by Harold Scott, the beginning is a lean-forward-in-your-seat opener as soul music blares, ramped up automatically on either side of a throne built high above the stage, a catal- uctic moves stagefront and the cast dances its way down the sides. The entire scene bespeaks innovation, spectacle and good drama. Black actors introduce themselves, while above them, on and around the throne, other black actors sit masked in white. This tribunal of meat symbols includes the Queen, a Judge, a Monarch, a Governor, and an Artist. They (we) are to judge the re-enactment of a murder performed by the actors on stage.

We are beset by unanswered questions: are the actors black, or have they been enabled them- selves to perform by pretending to present a play on social conditions? Are we supposed to pretend that they are attempting to find? Who has murdered whom and what motivations? What mark the ultimate victor in the class struggle? So far so good; the evening's promise is still alive. But even while the actors are introducing themselves and explaining what is to come, the momentum begins to falter, interest begins to wane.

The one element that could function as a brilliant exploitation is the cast. Unfortunately, The New African Company does not succeed. Instead of well-motivated and genuine response we get technical, airportic, realistic soliloquies. Lines are recited, not lived, and the role of the Governor (a Negro pulling a written speech out of his pocket, a member of the audience holding the victim's sewing action meant as either satire or else a comment on a time wasting gimmick. Even more dis- (Please turn to page 6)

music:

Feirtag

Live/Dead_freaky

By Michael Feirtag and Rex Boggs

Feirtag

in the early 60's, the Merry Pranksters discovered LSD. The Pranksters) is a band of heads led by novelist Ken Kesey, pro- cessed to use the mind-expanding micrograms in the worst way— they invited the youth of Los Angeles, hell, anyone who was just L.A. freaky, to an Acid (hee has) Test, spiked the Kool Aid with the mind expander, and sold it to them. After all, once you've smashed the door in the door of perception, you can't just stay there in the infinite. You've got to learn how to live under these new condi- tions, with your synapses ups and your mind dobbering on the present. If you can bring to- gether the energy of hundreds of individuals in the monster col- lective Trip, and live to tell, you've graduated.

Along with the music came a new form of judging music. Since the Dead's music was sup- posed to whip the mind into the consistancy of butterfliescodding, the sounds were deemed to combine the music of the instru- ment, the set, and the audience.

Freaky in spirit, was all this new? How far back does drug-induced music go? In the late 1960's, the Grateful Dead and other bands like The Band and Big Brother and the Holding Company, were using LSD and other mind-expanding drugs. The Grateful Dead's music was influenced by the use of LSD, which produced a mind-expanding effect. The Grateful Dead's music was characterized by its psychedelic sound, which included the use of unusual instruments such as the sitar and the Hammond organ. The band's music was also known for its improvisational nature, with band members often creating new songs on the spot. The Grateful Dead's music was also influenced by the use of political and social commentary, with songs that addressed issues such as race, poverty, and social injustice. The band's music was also known for its spiritual and religious themes, with many of their songs focusing on themes such as love, peace, and spirituality.