

N. Y. Critics Laud Roadside

During the month of September, Roadside Theater performed its newest show, SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN, off-Broadway in New York at the Bessie Schonberg Theater. While Roadside has performed other of its shows in the Big Apple, this was SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN's first New York appearance. Because Roadside draws their style and content from their mountain home in southwest Virginia and east Kentucky, it is always interesting to hear how people outside of the area react to its performances. The New York reception was warm.

In a recent telephone conversation with Ron Short, the author of and performer in SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN, he said of the New York experience, "It was a little strange at first - performing our story for a New York crowd. But it got easier, and it became clear that the show has something to say to all types of people from all kinds of backgrounds."

The *New York Post* called the show, "extraordinary theatre," and a national Public Radio broadcast reported, "What

emerges in SOUTH OF THE MOUNTAIN is a portrait of Americans in a locale, Appalachia, that's more rich and immediate than you're likely to read in any social history." But, perhaps most interesting was the *New York Villager* which states, "There is an intriguing and admirable solidity about this trio that you seldom see on a New York stage."

Roadside returned home from New York only briefly before embarking upon its fall tour of the Southeast, being sponsored by the Southern Arts Federation.

Kentucky Department of the Arts Commissioner Kay Lowe, who was in New York for the All-Kentucky art exhibit at Barker Gallery, was in the New York audience during this performance.

"It was one of the most moving theatre experience I've ever had," she said. "To be away from the familiar, and to see and feel others react to this marvelous human show was wonderful."