

FREE SOUTHERN THEATRE STARTS

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI-- A "Free Southern Theatre" -- a theatre project to encourage "thought and awareness among Negroes" -- was begun here this week.

The first appearance of the theatre group will be here, beginning June 13 with a ten-week season.

A mobile company will take stage productions into the rest of the state.

Sponsors for the Free Southern Theatre include folk singers Harry Belafonte and Theodore Bikel; authors James Baldwin and Langston Hughes; actors Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee and Robert Ryan, and Lincoln Kirstein, general director of the New York City Ballet.

The theatre will work toward "the establishment of permanent stock and repertory companies, with touring units, in major population centers of the South, staging plays that reflect the struggles of the American Negro."

The idea was initiated by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and is supported by the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO). It will be assisted by Tougaloo Southern Christian College, near here.

The theatre will seek to combat "the degrading effect of inferior education, the deliberate exclusion of the Negro community from all but the most meager cultural resources and the omissions and distortions of local press, radio and television.

Professional and amateur talent will be used in staging plays.

Scripts under consideration include "Purlie Victorious" by Ossie Davis, "Do You Want To Be Free?" by Langston Hughes, "Lower Than The Angels" by John O. Killens and a modern adoption of "Antigone".

For further information, write: Free Southern Theatre
1917 Lynch Street
Jackson, Mississippi.