

# Crescendoes of hilarity to highlight 'A Flea in Her Ear'

When you see a play billed as a "farce" you begin to conjure up images of Laurel and Hardy moving a piano, or Soupy Sales with the custard pie decorating his face or perhaps Charlie Chaplin proposing marriage to a 300-pound chick that smokes Double Masters Patella's, Right?

If you expect that kind of three-ring circus when you attend "A Flea in Her Ear" by Georges Feydeau at the Howell Theater, you'll be pleasantly surprised. Though

the slapstick element will be there, there is a precision to farce lacking from the broad, low humor of the vaudeville house. Feydeau's turn of the century comedy is alive with improbable situations and confusing complications.

"The audience shouldn't expect to learn by our comedy," states director, Dallas Williams, rather the show "is a coup of entertainment, a fast-paced, physical play that comes on like a tornado."

In most dramas or comedies there are not over fifty entrances and exits. "Flea in

Her Ear" has over 200; so the possibilities of mistaken identities surprise discoveries and bedroom high jinks is endless.

The characters are larger than life and certainly do not react like normal humans.

"They do not use their wills or intelligence to reason out a solution," explained Williams. This avoids focus on the characters and the crescendo of confusion becomes the center of hilarity.

The crescendo in "Flea" concerns an elderly

gentleman whose wife attempts to entrap him into proving his infidelity. Believing the rendezvous was a friend and so the story goes on. Suffice to say, there is a mad Spaniard flourishing a pistol and the hotel's porter looks just like the gentleman.

Georges Feydeau was a French author whose farces have placed him just behind Moliere as the second-ranking French comedy writer.

Those who expect a faded carbon copy of Moliere will

find that Feydeau's farce outpaces the slower more intellectual satire of his predecessor.

When you assess the acting in this production, ignore character analysis. Instead, the most essential features to look for are clean, comic timing, physical impact and air ego that allows the actor to be a part of an ensemble rather than a scene stealer. The quality of the

directing is best evidenced by the pace of the play and the precision of the physical movement.

"Flea in Her Ear" is the beginning of another season at Howell Memorial Theatre. Student season tickets are \$6. The bill of fare includes "The Rose and the Ring" by Thacheray, Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Recruiting Officer" by George

Farguhar.

The man responsible for this season's theater and the existence of NU's summer repertory theater is Dallas Williams. Williams appears to be a man who could play Willie Lomax or Walter Mitty equally well. He seems to relish the words that he "discovers" in the midst of conversation.

According to the prominent director, it is unfortunate that we are surrounded by amateur theater. "The American theater is very young and has thrived on this

amateurism," he says, "but professional theater, like the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, is on the upswing."

Several factors, however, bode well for the theater. The first is the addition of new means of production. A recent play at Howell employed a motion picture as a background to action, slides were used in another and mime and stylized dance played an important part in Williams' own production of "Royal Hunt of the Sun" last year.

## Hoffman suits 'Midnight Cowboy' role

by Tom Lonquist  
Nebraskan Reviewer

"Midnight Cowboy," a movie based on the novel by James Herlihy, is the story of two young men—Joe Buck (John Voight) and "Ratzo" Rizzo (Dustin Hoffman).

Buck leaves his native Texas for Manhattan with dreams of the new life as the savior of every sex-starved, well-to-do woman in New York, while Rizzo dreams of abandoning his past life for a fresh start in the balmy breezes of Florida.

by Simon and Garfunkle.

Midnight Cowboy can be best-described as a deep, disturbing movie if the viewer looks carefully for the symbolism and imagery involved. One cannot comprehend the film entirely in one sitting.

Ticket lines form early, and moviegoers question

whether they will be admitted on the night they choose to attend.

"Citizen Kane," an excellent film from the Forties, kicks off the Nebraska Union's weekend film series. Showings are at 7 and 9 p.m. on the downtown campus, Friday and Saturday, and at the same times on Sunday

at the East Campus Union. Admission is 50 cents.

Tickets for the Foreign Film Society showings are on sale until October 10 in the North Lobby of the Union.

For truly fine entertainment, see "Midnight Cowboy," "Citizen Kane" and buy your Foreign Film tickets now.

Both eventually meet and develop a friendship unique first time meaningful to either.

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In "Midnight Cowboy," Hoffman sheds his identity as the Graduate and establishes himself as an outstanding character suited for a variety of roles. Voight does a magnificent job in his characterization. He is a fresh, young star from whom the public can expect great things to come.

If the viewer goes to "Midnight Cowboy" expecting to see Hoffman in the Graduate role, he will be sorely disappointed. The only thing that is similar to Hoffman's first movie besides the actor is an occasional song sung

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