

New Yorkers, Alabamans see University professor's plays

by Carolyn Hull

University Theatre professor Joseph Baldwin recently had "the thrill of having a play produced in New York City," and saw another of his original scripts done at the University of Alabama. Through special arrangments, he was able to attend both shows.

The "playwrighting teacher" as he termed himself, started taking playwrights seriously while stationed in London during World War II. He had a chance to see a lot of theatre there. His work includes verse plays, prose, adaptations to one act and full length shows.

Baldwin estimated that he has written about 20 one acts and 24 long plays over the years.

His one-act verse play "Pool Hall of the Heart" which was produced by a repertory theatre in New York City, won the St. Louis Poetry Center Award in 1967.

According to Baldwin, it has four actors playing a number of different roles, trying them on like masks. He called it somewhat absurdist.

Baldwin's published plays are with Samuel French and The Dramatic Publishing Company. He receives royalities for each performance.

Creative work in the arts is considered post graduate work, Baldwin said, so he likes to see the shows produced to view the final outcome of his efforts.

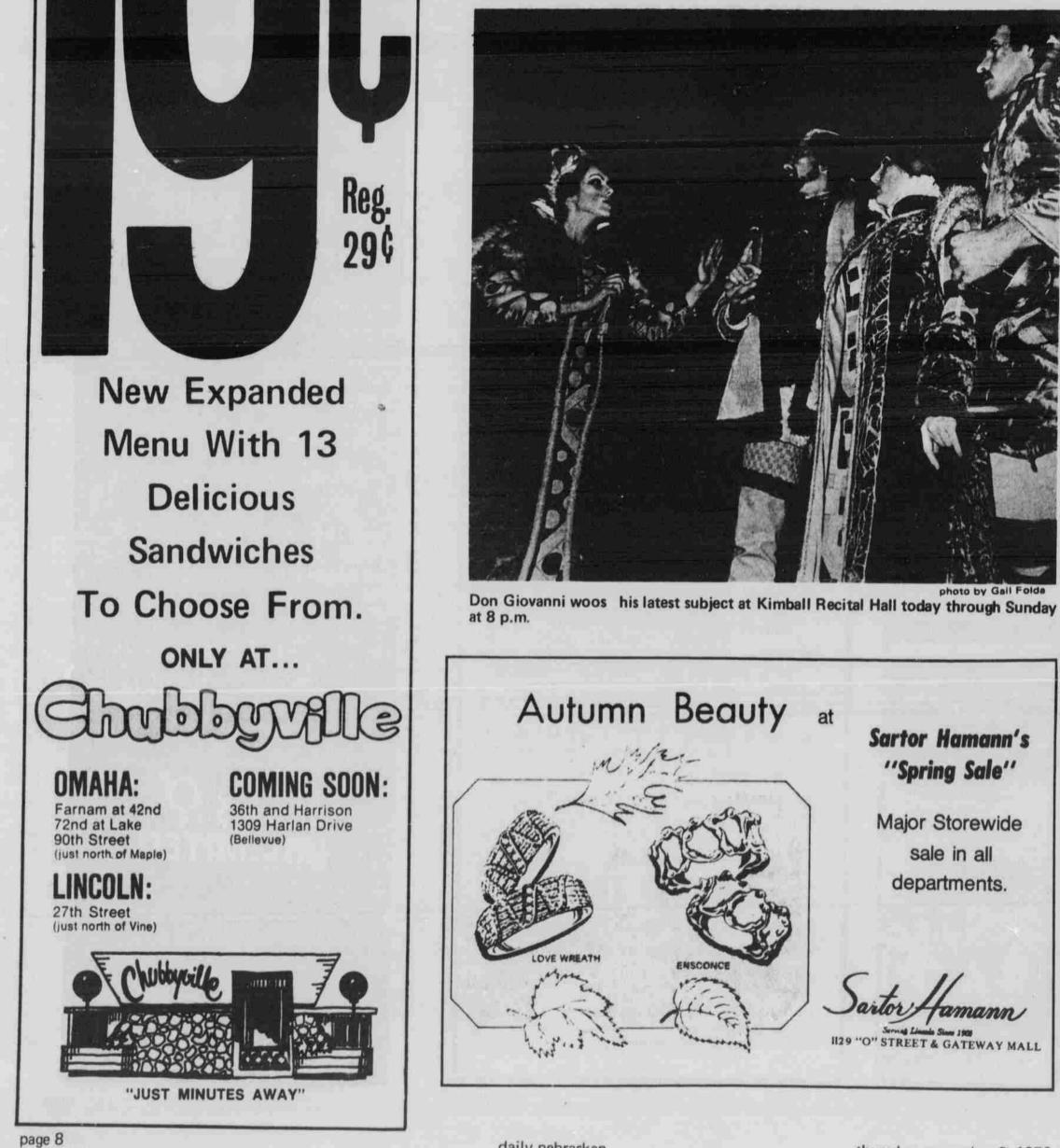
This also was arranged with the University of Alabama on its production of "Eagles, Walking."

A comedy of World War II, the show was produced as a world premiere for the mainstage season. According to Baldwin, the head of the theatre there, Marian Galloway, is a former professor he worked with while he was at the University of Iowa for graduate studies.

She contacted him about doing an original script and Baldwin sent a rough draft which they rewrote and polished for the production.

The show deals with five men, left-over officers, and what is done to fill their time such as mail call and finding girls for Friday night dances.

"Although they'd never admit to it, the play shows how the men, waiting for their planes to arrive on base, get very possessive and critical when forced to share a small place," Baldwin said.



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