

Unwilling patrons of the steambath marvel at the play-acting of their companions.

Sweaty, steamy show offers serious moments

By Lynn Roberts

A run-down steambath portraying a sort of purgatory, and God depicted as a Puerto Rican steambath attendant provide the setting for an entertaining and thought-provoking comedy.

Bruce J. Friedman's "Steambath", directed by William Morgan, lets us see a little of ourselves in the characters who have been taken from life at what seem to them to be inopportune moments.

A current production of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Steambath" brings together a group of people of varied ages and backgrounds in a waiting room between this world and the next.

God, the Puerto Rican attendant, decides the fate of the world by tuning into a strange looking contraption that allow him to monitor people's lives and make decisions accordingly.

Amusing stories

He allows people to stay in the steambath as long as they can amuse and intrigue him with their stories.

One character, Tandy, is allowed to stay longer than the others, but begins to see how shallow his life was and realizes he doesn't have much reason to live.

The other characters include the Oldtimer who has seen and done a little bit of everything and a girly and sloppy man, Bieberman, who irritates others with his gross habits.

A young woman, Meredith, and two gay men provide variety along with a frustrated

stockbroker and a Playboy bunny, Gottlieb.

Parts played well

All parts were played well, but Roger Johnson as the attendant was outstanding. Doug Brissey as Tandy portrayed the shallowness of his character well.

Cindy Wallis as the Oldtimer curses her way through the play and Missy Critchfield as Meredith creates a sympathetic character.

The set, designed by Sandy

Moeller, does a fine job of creating the steambath setting and is effective in drawing the audience into the play.

The smallness of the Howell studio theatre, which seats less than 100, works especially well with this play.

Lights by Jerry Lewis, sound effects and props are also well done and add to the vitality of the production.

"Steambath" will be given July 29, 31, Aug. 4, 6, 16, 18, 22, and Sept. 2, 5.

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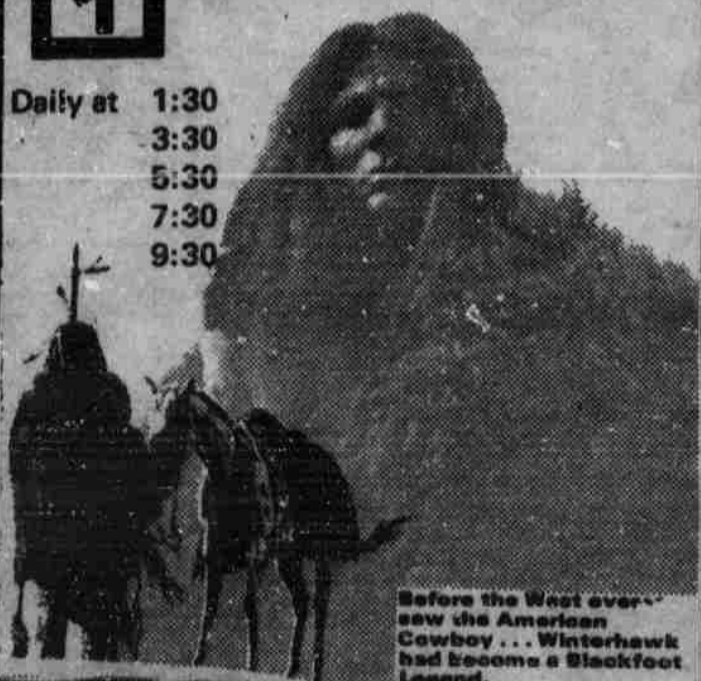
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