

arts/entertainment

Christmas Carol singing original tunes

By Brian McManus

The Theatre Arts department will perform the play "A Christmas Carol" during December. The play, written by R. Dale Wilson and directed by R. Scott Lank, is an adaptation of the book by Charles Dickens.

Lank, who is directing the play as the thesis for his Master of Fine Arts degree, said the play will feature seven original songs composed by Clark Kimberling, professor at the University of Evansville in Indiana.

"The songs were written for two pianos and reflect the time period of the play, (1843)," Lank said.

The production will be elaborate. Lank said there were going to be many quick scene changes in the play and, to effectively accomplish this, they will be using a revolving stage.

"Although I didn't want the play to be overly sentimental in its portrayal, I want to add spectacle to the show through visual means. The adaptation written by Wilson is a good, solid script. We are going to complement this with strong production — the use of lighting effects, costumes, make-up. We even have fog and snow in certain scenes."

IN SPITE of the elaborate production, Lank said his intention is not to make a "picture postcard" type of play. He is going to concentrate on the strong class separation that existed in 1843.

"That was one of the strong points in Dicken's story. He wrote it in a time of poor working houses and mandatory child labor. The class separation at the time was much more pronounced than

it is today.

"His message was that we are all fellow passengers on this earth and that monetary achievement doesn't change this fact. We are all heading for the grave, so we should make life as pleasant for one another as we can along the way."

One of the main obstacles Lank has to deal with is the size of the production.

"The cast will consist of 36 mem-

bers. It is a task to use this many people without a sense of clutter."

Lank added that 14 of the members were children ranging from 8 to 14 years old.

He held two days of auditions for children's roles after advertising in the newspaper, sending letters to public schools and talking with the Lincoln Community Playhouse, which sponsors acting classes for children.



Graduate student R. Scott Lank is directing the Theater Department Arts' production of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

"THE RESPONSE was excellent. We had over 50 children come to the auditions. From this, we were able to select a very good group.

"When working with children, there are many problems to deal with—lack of attention, tardiness, and non-involvement. This is only natural, they're kids. But I haven't had too many problems at all with this group. They have been very attentive and well behaved. I am sure they will do well in the play. The boy that is playing the role of Tiny Tim is especially good."

Lank said that Wilson's adaptation stayed fairly close to Dickens' book. One difference is in a scene with Scrooge and a girl named Beolinda. The play will concentrate more on this segment. Lank said the scene is effective in portraying Scrooge as a man who once felt deep emotion before becoming immersed in achievement and greed.

ANOTHER DIFFERENCE is the portrayal of the ghost of Christmas-Yet-To-Come. A child will play this role to symbolize that the future is in the hands of the next generation.

The play will be performed at 8 p.m. Dec. 7 to 8, 13 to 15, and 20 to 21. There will be matinees at 2 p.m. on Dec. 9, 16 and 22. They are giving group discounts, but Lank said that people who want to see the play should act fast, because seating is limited.

"The seating in the first five performances has already reached the balcony," Lank said. "People who want good seats should act now. Most shows will probably be sold out before too long."

Hothouse set in 1955

Play depicts reality after WWII

By Betsie Ammons

Family relationships and the role of women are explored in the next UNL Studio Theatre play, Megan Terry's *Hothouse*.

The play, which opens Thursday, is concerned with "finding a family in a world that has torn families apart," according to director Judith Pratt, a graduate student working on her doctorate in theater.

Pratt said the play, set in 1955, also deals with what happened to American women as a result of the depression and two world wars.

The women remained at home during those times, "tending the home fires," Pratt said, and by 1955, were beginning to question their traditional roles, even though the women's movement did not blossom for another decade.

Calling *Hothouse* a realistic play, Pratt said she chose it because she finds it difficult and challenging.

"When I read it I thought 'Wow, I'm really going to have to do some thinking to understand this, but in the end, I will learn something I want to know,'" she said.

She chose a realistic play in the style of Edward Albee or Tennessee Williams, because she thought it would help her at this stage of her education, she added.

Pratt said she prefers working in smaller theatres such as UNL's studio, and that is the theatre usually available to student directors.

When she found which theatre she could work in, she chose a play that would work in that space, she said.

The play's author, Megan Terry, is playwright in residence at Omaha's Magic Theatre, Pratt said Terry is better-known for her avant garde plays rather than those in the realistic vein. A Terry play in the avant-garde style, *Goonie Goonie*, is now playing at the Magic Theatre.

Terry also has worked with the Open Theatre, an experimental group formed in the '60s.

Hothouse premiered in 1974 at the Chelsea Theater Center in New York. It is the story of three generations of women, a grandmother, mother and daughter, living in Seattle just after the Korean war and the love and choices available to each.

In the UNL production, the grandmother is portrayed by Beth Marie Hansen, the mother is Patti Raun and daughter is Deborah Brooks. Caron Buinis, T. Marni Vos, Ed Hanson, Larry Petersen, Jay Juds, Richard Dinsmore, Blake Hambrick and Denise Frost also are featured.

Hothouse will run Thursday through Dec. 4 at the Studio Theatre in the Temple Building, 11th and R streets. Tickets are available at the Temple Box Office.

Vonnegut to host Twain re-creation

A dramatic recreation of *Life on the Mississippi*, Mark Twain's story of his youthful experiences as a riverboat pilot, has started into production near Peoria, Ill. for a major public television in the 1980-81 season.

Kurt Vonnegut is host of the two-hour film television special which is being produced by the Nebraska Educational Television Network in association with The Great Amwell Company of New York—the team responsible for the Public Broadcasting Service's innovative *Anyone For Tennyson?* poetry series.

Life on the Mississippi is the pilot program of a projected series of nine Mark Twain specials to be presented on PBS over three seasons, dramatizing the famous and well-loved works of America's best-known writer. Included will be *The Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing It*, *Huckleberry Finn*,

The Gilded Age and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

The National Endowment for the Humanities has provided the basic funding for the production of *Life on the Mississippi* with Deere & Company and the Exxon Corporation providing corporate underwriting support.

A cast of 40 headed by Robert Lansing (*12 O'Clock High*) as pilot Horace Bixby and newcomer David Knell playing Sam, the young "cub" apprentice, is currently filming on the authentic paddle-wheeler Julia Belle Swain at Henry, Ill. a short distance upriver from Peoria.

A scholarly advisory board for the Mark Twain series includes Daniel Aaron, Harvard University; Walter Blair, University of Chicago; William M. Gibson, University of Wisconsin; Justin Kaplan, Cambridge; Henry Nash Smith, University of California; and Anne F. Scott, Duke University.

Orchestra jazzes up

The Nebraska Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra will appear in concert at the Lincoln Pius X High School Fine Arts Center on Dec. 6, at 7:30 p.m.

In August, 1978, the Neoclassic Jazz Orchestra toured England and Scotland for three weeks as the U.S. representative to the International Festival of the Arts.

The concert will feature selections from bands such as Count Baise, Stan Kenton, Thad Jones-Mel Lewis and the NBC (Tonight Show) orchestra, as well as original compositions of the Jazz Orchestra.

Tickets are \$3 and are available in advance at Dirt Cheap Records and at the door. This concert is the only Lincoln performance scheduled for this season.

NETV hunts heirs

Beginning Sunday, the Nebraska Education Television Network, in cooperation with the Nebraska State Treasurer's Office, will air a series of "mini-programs" just before signing off each night.

Entitled *Treasure Hunt*, the short programs will list the names and addresses of persons who have unclaimed property coming to them.

Each year, there is a surprising amount of cash, checking and savings accounts, utility deposits, insurance proceeds, stocks, dividends and other abandoned assets which flow into the Nebraska Permanent School Fund because no one claims them.

There is a good chance that the rightful owners or heirs of this property live within a radius of 150 miles of the listed address of the owner. Anyone discovering that they are possible heirs to any of this unclaimed property, or having some personal knowledge of the owners or relatives, should call the Nebraska Educational Television Network, Information Department.

Correction

In the Monday, Nov. 19 issue of the Daily Nebraskan, it was incorrectly reported that Bill Behmer played the guitar at an Open Stage Night at Jesse's Lounge, and that Bill Mearns played the dulcimer. The story should have said that Mearns played the guitar and Behmer was the dulcimer player. The Daily Nebraskan apologizes for the error.