

# Temple complex debuts after building renovation

By Casey McCabe

"Temple Lives" say the buttons that have recently shown up on campus. After 84 years and a \$3.4 million renovation, the UNL Temple building is getting its new lease on life and a new home — the Temple Theatre Complex.

That means the Department of Theatre Arts will soon be vacating its year-and-a-half temporary residence at Bessey Hall. It'll be a move that Rex McGraw, department chairman, says students and faculty "can't wait for." The transfer of people, furniture, costumes and equipment will take about two months.

Financing for Temple's facelift came from the 1979 Legislature and Gov. Charles Thone. Built in 1897, it is the second oldest building on campus, the oldest being Architecture Hall. While McGraw and theater manager Pat Overton agree that the renovation will bring some welcome relief to the department, they both acknowledge

that some of its housing problems have yet to be solved.

### New building

"Our initial request was for a new building, and the Legislature did pass that proposal," Overton said. "It was OK'd and approved this way until it was changed by the governor, who didn't want any new capital expenditures. He wanted the classroom building renovated rather than a new theater building built. The money was virtually the same."

The cost of combining the renovation and a new theater building was in the neighborhood of \$7 million. The proposed site for a new theater was next door to Temple, on what was once the Mid-City Toyota lot on the corner of 12th and Q streets. The university still owns the property.

"I'm already working on plans for a new theater," McGraw said. "The request is ready anytime anybody wants to hear it. But I was surprised at the appropriations we did receive. We're very happy we got what we got."

Overton said the theater department lost two of its theater spaces in the Temple renovation.

"We needed a new theater when we asked for it originally," she said. "This is a marvelous help, but we still need a new theater."

Temple's Howell stage seats 382, "a nice size", Overton said. "But the department needs more versatility in its stages."

"We have in the Studio theater the ability to work black box or in the round, which you can't do in a proscenium stage like Howell," she said. "The thing we do not have that we did in the old Temple is a thrust stage. You need a thrust stage for some types of theater, and you definitely need one to train theater students."

### "Space cadets"

Overton said the new Temple has a directing classroom which will be used to stage small plays, and another small

room in the basement could be used if a lighting grid is installed.

Besides the type of work necessary to renovate any old building, Temple was gutted completely to allow the department to use the space as best it sees fit. A faculty committee, calling itself "the space cadets," examined the building to put theater department needs and desires into the initial planning stages.

The university then hired theater consultant Van Phillips of Purdue University. He refined the faculty's plan.

McGraw said the department has been well served in the appropriations for the Temple renovation.

"The building was all gutted, except for the actual theater, which they are cosmetizing. Beyond that they made it for us," McGraw said. "The classrooms were not usable because they were lecture halls. We need big rooms without furniture for our classes, and that's what we're getting."

### Boosts recruiting

McGraw said the department has been recruiting "tooth and nail" for theater students over the last four years. While it hasn't been waiting for the Temple renovation, McGraw said it will be helpful. He pointed out that when the recruiting started, there were three people in the graduate department. Now there are 34.

"Right now we can't handle any more," said McGraw.

The move into Temple will start Nov. 23. McGraw hopes the process will be finished and the department sufficiently settled in by second semester. The first production in Temple will be *Light Up The Sky* on the Studio stage in February. The first Howell production on the renovated stage will be *Hedda Gabler* in March.

As for the legendary ghosts that have been rumored to haunt the old Temple:

"I don't know, the attic was never touched so the ghosts might still be there," McGraw said. "I'm not going to go looking up there by myself."

## entertainment notes

Andre-Michel Schub, gold medal winner of the sixth Van Cliburn International Competition in May, will appear with the Lincoln Symphony Nov. 10. Schub has selected Robert Schumann's "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra," as the major opus to present in Lincoln.

other state winners at the national finals in Nashville, Tenn. in April of 1982. All 50 finalists will participate in a 90-minute television special featuring the Top 10 national finalists and starring Ray Price and his band, the Cherokee Cowboys.

Country music singers and musicians interested in more details may contact Dennis Ernest at KBHL, 2820 N. 48th St. or by calling 464-0606. Contest categories are: solo, duet, trio, quartet, instrumentalist, and country or bluegrass band.

University Program Council Concerts presents new music by 999 and the Alley Cats Nov. 10, in the Nebraska Union Centennial Room 14th and R streets.

Radio station KBHL has signed an agreement with Wrangler Country Search, America's largest country music talent contest which offers a \$50,000 First Prize. According to station representative, Dennis Ernest, KBHL will conduct preliminary contests through November.

The local contest winner will advance to the Nebraska state finals with the state winner to then vie with 49

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