

# Arts & Entertainment

## Lincoln Playhouse finishes successful season

By Stephanie Zink

Community theatre of the people, for the people, by the people. It's alive and well at the Lincoln Community Playhouse.

Michael Mitchell, artistic director in his first season at the playhouse, said attendance was up considerably from past years.

One show, "Annie," broke every attendance record, including one that was made the first weekend that "Terra Nova" ran.

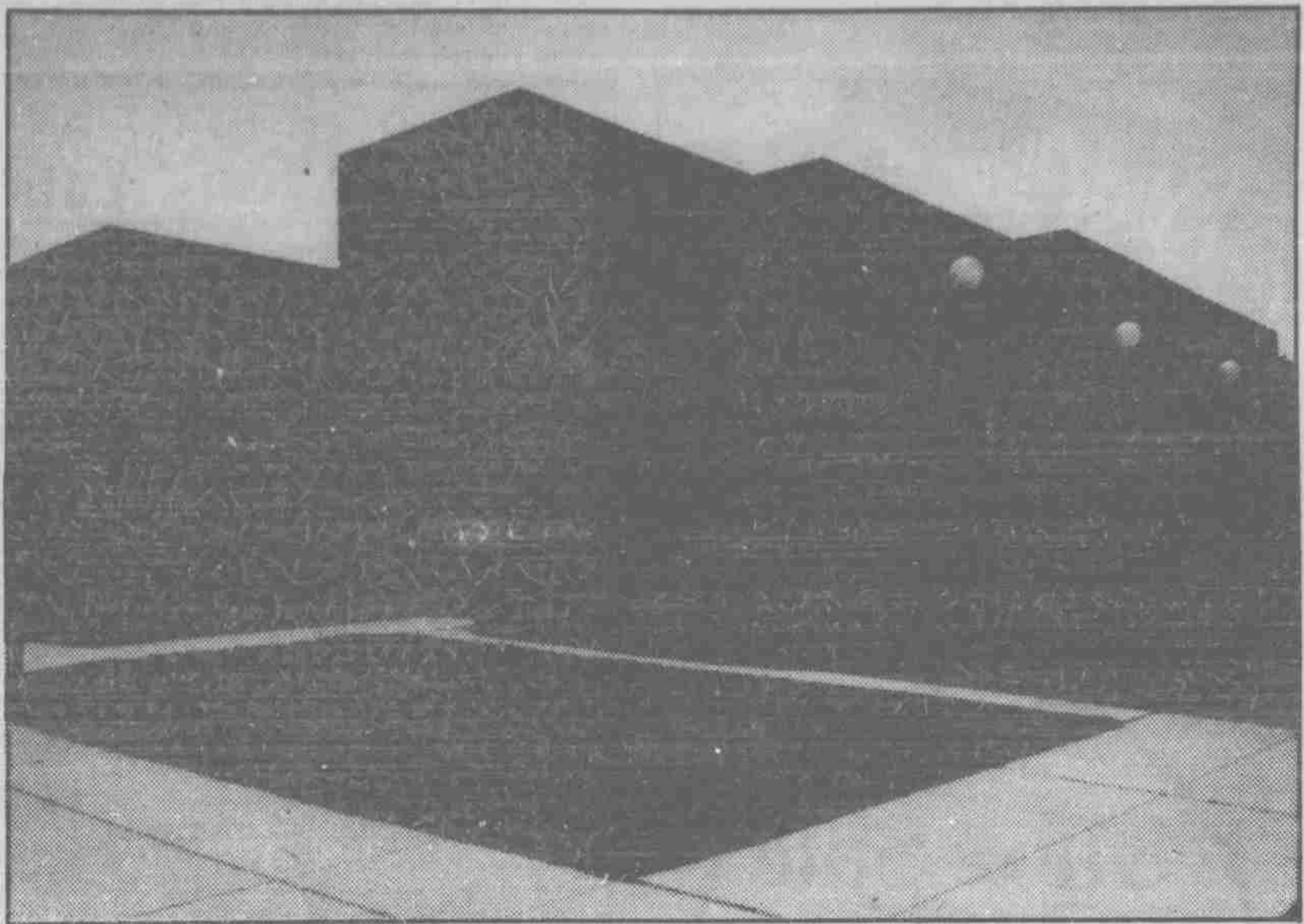
"I had some apprehensions about 'Annie,'" Mitchell said. He said some of the reasons for his apprehension were the popularity of "Annie" and the recent movie version of the show. He said despite his apprehensions, they had no problems — the performance sold out from the first day it ran and garnered many good reviews.

"Having worked with children before, I had no problems working with them (children) in Annie," Mitchell said. One hundred sixty-four girls tried out for nine positions in "Annie." Mitchell said the girls who made it were very talented, especially the actresses who played Annie (Annie Rinke) and Molly (Ashley Amber Haase) the roles best known to the public.

Mitchell said he was so amazed at six-year-old Haase's style and consistency that it was hard to believe that she was only in kindergarten.

He said of several unusual things that have happened to him, one of the strangest was auditioning dogs to play Sandy in "Annie." He said it was more difficult than auditioning people because dogs were more unpredictable. Mitchell said the strangest thing about the dog auditions weren't the dogs themselves but the media, who went crazy over the event. He said the Lincoln Journal and Star, the Daily Nebraskan, Channels 6 and 10 were there; the AP wire service even picked up the story.

Although this season has just ended, Mitchell already is looking forward to next year. Since Mitchell came to the playhouse mid-season he didn't have any say into which plays he was to direct. A committee made up of a few of the playhouse's board members chose the plays that they thought would appeal to the most people, keeping in mind variety and how difficult a set would be to build. Mitchell said the plays are spaced so that the people who build the sets won't be doing two difficult sets in a row. He also had to research what had been done in the last twenty years at the Playhouse so that they don't repeat plays and he also went on his own



Craig Andresen/Daily Nebraskan

The Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St.

knowledge of what would be successful.

Mitchell also took into account the lack of women's roles this season and the absence of Noel Coward's Comedy from the playhouse. He said that a good playhouse season has a cross section of experiences and a couple of musicals of some nature, because the musicals are what sells the season tickets. He also said that a good playhouse season has a cross section of experiences and a couple of musicals of some nature, because the musicals are what sells the season tickets. He also keeps in mind what is being done in other parts of the country and what shows are being revived, Mitchell said.

"Every time you come to the playhouse it should be different kind of occasion," Mitchell said. He said that all of the plays in the 1984-85 season are set in different time periods and that all of them have a strong story line.

Not only should next season provide a variety of experiences, the summer show, "Scapino," will instill something that hasn't been done at the Playhouse before. Before "Scapino" there will be a spaghetti dinner, followed by dessert during intermission. Mitchell said "Scapino" is a Neopolitan farce based on Moliere's style of writing.

Another new thing that the Playhouse is trying, Mitchell said, is a production of "Peter Pan" at Christmas time. They already have the Foy family to come do flying for the show. The Foy's did the flying for the original Broadway production and the movie starring Sandy Duncan.

Next season will consist of "On Golden Pond," "Anne of the Thousand Days," "Monday After the Miracle," "Hay Fever" and "Cabaret." For ticket information call the Playhouse at 489-9608.

## Leisure Man

IN "MODERN LOVE"

by A. KIRVANA



A. K. KIRVANA