

Arts and Entertainment

University Theatre to present 'Amadeus'

By Toger Swanson
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

Whispers of Salieri! Salieri!, assassin! Mozart! will be heard on stage of the Howell Theater Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Dec. 10 through 15. "Amadeus" by Peter Shaffer, produced by the University Theatre, and directed by professor Tice Miller, promises to be an entertaining look into the world of a musical genius.

"Amadeus" involves passion, intrigue, death and most of all, the beautiful music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. His music pervades the entire production and brings life and power to the characters. The music created by Mozart provides the show's source of conflict.

Antonio Salieri, played by Larry French, is a contemporary and rival of Mozart. French explains that his character wants no sympathy, only understanding. He asks for no pity from those of his age but appeals to the ghosts of the future, the audience.

French said Salieri has been the most challenging character of his career because Salieri can be worked and rehearsed, but never perfected. He sees this role as the finest of our age in the theatre, he said. In fact, Salieri never leaves the stage during the entire show. French began rehearsing for the role in September and plans to take a break from the theater after "Amadeus" and devote his time to full-time work on his doctoral degree.

A protruding stage puts the audience almost among the actors and actresses. Peter Beudert designed the raked stage to extend nearly into the audience in order to intensify contact between audience and players. Salieri's mind provides the real setting for the show with the audience invited to climb in and view

the story of Mozart's fame through the eyes of a jealous, second-rate composer.

While the viewpoint is that of Salieri, the subject is an impetuous, vile, immature, offensive, young genius named Mozart. Jeff Talbott portrays this "creature," as Salieri calls him, in his first major role at the University Theatre. Talbot said he sees Mozart as a musical genius, but also as a man with frailties and shortcomings.

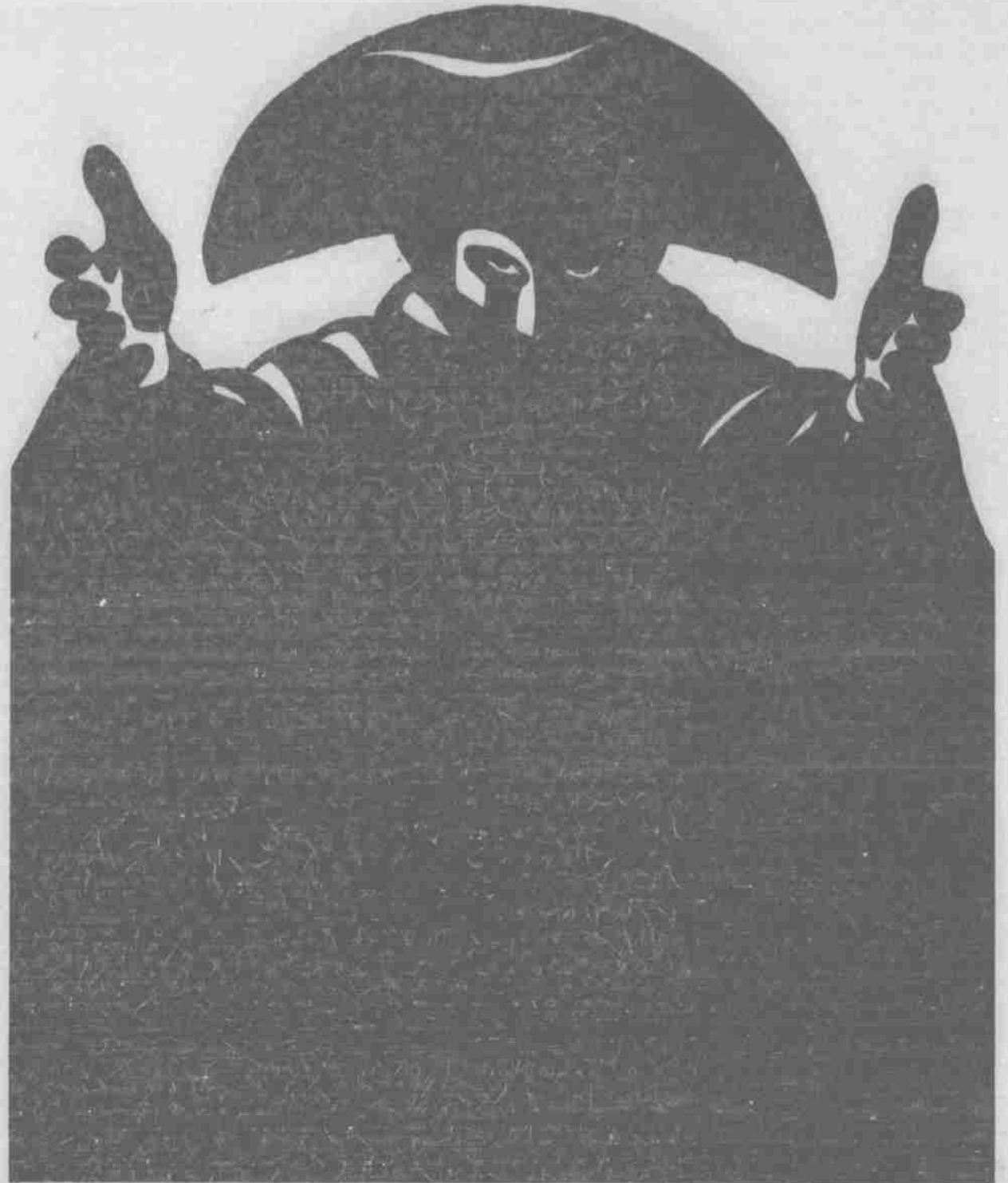
Shaffer's script evokes pity for the man, but awe for his music. The character of Mozart must be diverse to portray both the genius and the child wrapped up in this troubled man. The enigma of Mozart is what makes him so fascinating and so challenging to portray, Talbott said.

The third major role in the show, Mozart's wife Constanze, will be played by Roxanne Baird. She sees her character as a calculating intelligent woman who cares for her husband but possibly more for his career. Baird doesn't see "Amadeus" as a tragedy, because Mozart was simply used up at the play's conclusion after having given so much to mankind.

The play in its present form opened in New York, where it received 5 Tony awards in 1981. What makes the play work is its characterizations and the intense focus upon personalities. Miller plans to magnify that focus, a task live theater is suited for.

One of the most difficult things for the cast to learn has been to synchronize their lines with the 2 1/2-hour soundtrack tape prepared from selected recordings by Patricia Flanagan Behrendt and Michael Pear.

Tickets for "Amadeus" may be purchased at the Howell Theater box office from noon to 5 p.m. week days on the first floor of the Temple Building, 12th and R streets, or by calling 472-2073.



'Tis the season to be jolly, and folks will be telling it on the mountain this week at UNL.

The UNL School of Music will perform its fourth annual "Messiah Sing" Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at Kimball Hall. All those who have sung Handel's Messiah are beckoned to sing it again. Singers are urged to bring their own scores; if that is not possible, scores will be on sale or loaned in the lobby before the big sing. Non-singers are welcome to come and listen.

Also at Kimball Hall will be a Christmas Carol Concert Saturday at 8 p.m. The concert is a School of Music production, billed as a "musical gift to the community." The program will include a mixture of familiar and unusual carols by Gabrieli, Schutz, J. M. Bach, Vaughan Williams and Mendelssohn.

The University Program Council and the University Chorus-East will present a Christmas Concert Sunday at 2:30 p.m. in the East Union Great Plains Room. The annual concert has been a tradition at UNL since the late 1940s. This year's version will feature holiday melodies from the 16th century, a West Indian spiritual and selections from Handel's Messiah. Admission is free.

ISO co-sponsors
'First Friday';
storyteller featured

Well-known Nebraska storyteller Duane Hutchinson will be the main attraction at this month's "First Friday," sponsored by the International Student Organization and the Office of International Educational Services.

The holiday special is free of charge and open to the entire UNL community, including children. The event is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday at St. Marks On The Campus, 13th and R streets.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

