

'Orphans' directed, acted extremely well

By Julie Naughton
Staff Reporter

"Orphans," presented by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln theater department, is an excellent rendition of a contemporary play. The UNL production of "Orphans," performed Nov. 10 through 18, is acted and directed extremely well; it is comparable to most professional productions. Scenes flowed easily, one into another, with no visible seams. The pacing was right on the money and the actors breathed life into their characters.

anything in their house since their mother's death many years before, and they are more than a little bizarre.

John Lepard played Treat, a petty criminal who supports his younger brother by robbing people. Treat is an abrasive, abusive and often violent character, but deep down inside he is a scared child. Lepard was able to reach the scared child that is Treat and communicate that scared child to the audience. Lepard, a first-year Master of Fine Arts candidate from Lansing, Mich., was excellent as the violent Treat. Lepard was extremely believable and excellent at creating sympathy for a potentially unlikable character. His Treat was touching as his character changed throughout the play.



John Lepard (front) and Devon Schumacher, cast members of "Orphans," prepare to go on stage.

David Hansen/Daily Nebraskan

Tom Crew, a junior theater major from Lincoln, played the introverted Phillip. Phillip is a backward and lonely man, an overgrown wild child. He has learned what he knows of the world through his brother's exaggerations and television shows. Phillip can recite every prize on the "Price is Right," but has only ventured outside his house once. Crew projected wide-eyed wonder as the scared Phillip; his portrayal of a po-

tentially one-dimensional character was superb. His Phillip had a simple, touching faith.

Devon Schumacher, a senior theater major from Lincoln, played the kidnapped Harold. Harold was an older orphan from Chicago, and related to the boys in ways that they had

never known. He became the father figure that they had been deprived of during their childhood. Schumacher, as the older Harold, was believable and tender. He is gentle with the two boys, trying to lead Treat away from his life of petty thievery. Harold seemed to want to provide the boys

with the love and caring that he never experienced himself.

Phillip begins to mature during the course of the play, thanks to Harold, the man that Treat kidnaps. Harold gives Phillip the encouragement that his brother Treat has never had the courage to give him.

theater REVIEW

During the course of the play, the characters metamorphosed from frankly unlikable people to more mature, sympathetic personalities.

"Orphans" is the story of two orphaned brothers sharing a shabby row house in Philadelphia. The story covers three weeks in the lives of the two brothers. During this time, they kidnap a man, steal things and learn about themselves.

The brothers have not changed

Attitude, simple daily experiences can determine the quality of life

By Mick Dyer
Staff Reporter

It seems like a long time ago... Russ and I were standing out on the dock after our shift was over, talking and feeling the sense of accomplishment that goes along with working hard and doing a good job. But mostly we were just quiet, caught up in our own thoughts.

opinion

Thanksgiving, 1983.
The sky was reticent and gray. The only sounds were the wind's incessant blowing blowing blowing, as clouds as heavy as iron marched imperiously overhead, and a couple of crows nagging at each other about the bitter cold off in the distance.
Russ was a rugged guy in his mid-40s from Minnesota, who looked and behaved more like a lumberjack than a chef, with his salt and pepper beard and red-plaid flannel shirts. He smoked Lucky

Strikes and drank tonic water (no booze) with a twist. He spoke softly, with a slight Dylanesque northern-Minnesota twang in his voice, and he laughed often and heartily. Only occasionally did his eyes give away the pain caused by years of hard living that makes a man older than he really is.

Russ was my boss and my mentor, who ignited my passion for cooking as a profession and who took an interest in answering my endless stream of questions.

Above all, he was one of the many people in my life who have taught me important lessons that have shaped who I am.

Russ taught me how to lead by example and to enjoy being a good team player. Most importantly, Russ taught me to accept life one day at a time.

He also taught me how to say, "son-of-a-bitch" a lot.

Ahem.
Anyway, at the time, I was 19 and full of enthusiasm for life. The whole world beckoned to me and anything and everything seemed possible, if I only knew which

course to chart. All my experiences seemed terribly beautiful and poetic -- whether it was sharing a cold drafty apartment with two of my closest friends or going for long walks in the middle of the night.

I may have even been a little uptight. I studied psychology in hopes of solving the mind-body problem. I wanted to discover some kind of physiological process that would explain -- and perhaps alleviate some of the symptoms of -- the deeply moving spiritual experiences that often distracted me while I was trying to get ahead in the world.

Now, at 25, I'm still full of enthusiasm for life and the whole myriad of possibilities still beckons and confuses me. I've grown accustomed to living in a cold, drafty apartment and I still go for long walks in the middle of the night.

So what has changed?
Not much. I'm a little older and have a few more distinguishing,

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'Jim's Journal' is slice of life, creator says

By Gretchen Boehr
Senior Reporter

Jim, of "Jim's Journal," is a quiet sort of guy who doesn't lead a particularly interesting life -- but he writes about it anyway.

Every day, students can read about Jim's mundane little life in a comic strip, which runs in 20 college newspapers across the nation. And many students might wonder: "Who is Jim?"

Meet Scott Dikkers, 24, a college student in Madison, Wis., known by his fans as "Jim."

"Jim is me, basically," Dikkers said.

The character of Jim is a college student and introvert, which also is the way Dikkers describes himself.

The cartoonist has attended four colleges: the University of Wisconsin at River Falls, the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, the University of Southern California and, currently, the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

And Dikkers still doesn't have a major.

"I'm kind of disenchanted with college," he said.

"Jim's Journal" began at the University of Wisconsin in Madison's campus newspaper in fall 1987.

"It started because I wanted to do a strip for the student newspaper and I thought it would be kind of funny if I had a guy who wrote what he did that day, even if it wasn't funny," he said.

At first the editors at the "Daily Cardinal" didn't like the strip.

"They said the art was bad and they didn't want to run it," Dikkers said.

But he said he was very determined and eventually the editors agreed to run the strip every other day.

As the story goes, the strip became an immediate success and after a month the Cardinal began printing "Jim's Journal" every day.

"It began to catch on with some people and started to become really

popular as they got to know what the characters were like and what they were doing," Dikkers said.

The strip has become so popular in Madison that Dikkers said he is a local celebrity.

"I don't really get that much fan mail," he said, "but the paper gets a lot of calls asking: 'Is Jim there?'"

"There's a lot of people who want to meet me and that's kind of creepy," he said.

But Dikkers is aware that his strip is unpopular, even hated, by some people in Madison as well as across the country.

"Some people just hate it because it's so meaningless," he said. "It's easy to make fun of because Jim is so simple and innocent."

Dikkers said a few people have mailed him copies of the journal with violent or sexual innuendoes added.

"I've seen them all," he said.

But Dikkers maintains "Jim's Journal" is funny because it isn't

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'Kill Jim' shirts for sale

By Gretchen Boehr
Senior Reporter

Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who hate "Jim's Journal" now can buy a T-shirt advertising their cause.

The shirts read "Kill Jim and burn his #@?*" Journal" and feature a stick figure, resembling Jim, with a bullet hole through his head.

Tom O'Hara, Pat Erb and Ken Frank, electrical engineering students at UNL, created the shirts as a business venture.

Since they didn't like "Jim's Journal," Frank said, he and his two friends decided a "Kill Jim" shirt would be a hot-selling item.

"We didn't like the cartoon because we thought it gave a bad name to all the hardworking artists

out there," said Frank, a junior from Norfolk.

"Jim just isn't funny," he said.

According to Frank, the three had been thinking about printing T-shirts for a long time.

"We wanted to make a shirt to sell around campus," Frank said. "But until now, we didn't have a gimmick."

"Jim's Journal" seems to be sparking a lot of controversy on campus and people either hate it or love it," he said.

"It's not that we're mad about 'Jim's Journal' or anything against the artist," Frank said. "We just wanted to make a fun shirt that would raise a little controversy."

Frank said he's received a lot of

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