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Lee Willet, left, Larry Mota, middle and Pat Lambrecht act in "The Firebugs" at the Studio Theatre.

Play's point buried in past

By Carter Van Pelt Staff Reporter

A tragedy is occurring this week at the Studio Theatre in the Temple Building. Unfortunately, it's of the unintentional sort.

theater PREVIEW

The Theatre Arts and Dance production of Max Frisch's "The Firebugs" is really pretty good. It's a clever play written about an important social issue. The tragedy is this: The meaning of the story probably

will be lost on most of the audience.

On its surface, "The Firebugs" is a simple story of a man named Gottlieb Biederman (Scott Cooke) who allows two arsonists (Lee Willet and Patrick Lambrecht) into his home, all the while knowing that they are planning to burn his house down.

Sound strange? Of course it does. And things get even stranger. Biederman knows that the arsonists have hauled several drums of gasoline into his attic, yet gives them matches.

This is certainly the part of play that most people will see. There is no

See FIREBUGS on 11

UNL opera production devoted to prima donnas

By Shannon Uehling Staff Reporter

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Opera Theatre will perform two one-act operas entitled "Viva La Prima Donna!" in the Kimball Recital Hall at 8 p.m. today and Saturday.

concert PREVIEW

The first opera, Mozart's "The Impresario," stars UNL music students Ruth Foley, Julie Eschlman and Darin Anderson.

"The Impresario," first performed in 1786, focuses on the battles and pranks that go on backstage at the opera.

In this opera, a theater manager must deal with two of Vienna's most famous prima donnas who audition for his company's premiere. A battle erupts between the two women as they belittle the accomplishments of one another.

The manager finds a solution for the conflict and allows the

women to work together on the title character Cassilda.

"La Divina," the second opera, features UNL music students Peggy Horrocks, Kathy Keefe and Anderson. Music professor Steven Bobst also appears in the performance.

The opera, written by Thomas Pasatieri, was first performed by New York's Juilliard School of Music in 1965.

"La Divina" is a humorous portrayal of the "farewell" performance of an aging diva. Her maid and manager are somewhat relieved to have an end to the problems caused by the diva's temperament.

After contemplating a future without the glamour, the prima donna announces she will give another farewell performance the following week.

David Bartholomew, head of the opera program at UNL, directs both of the miniature operas, which will be performed in English.

Michael Cotton is the featured pianist.

Tickets are available at the Lied Center Box Office for \$3 and \$5.

Tong Tana

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"Tong Tana" is a beautiful film, offering glimpses into the lives of the creatures of the jungle. Gibbons cry out with something like human voices. Bird calls are everywhere. A dark chattering cloud of bats whirls like a cyclone overhead.

Human voices are raised as well in laughter and sometimes outrage. A Penan chief resents the intrusion of "the company" and a government that will not represent his people's interests.

Manser claims that the Penans inhabit an "inner world." The line

between dream and waking is so blurred that to dream of the village burning is reason enough to abandon it.

That kind of culture is woefully unprepared to face the often hard, shameless edge of Western-style business.

They've tried blocking logging roads with fallen trees and simple road blocks. The loggers burn and bulldoze these markers and the Indians have been arrested and threatened with long prison terms.

"Tong Tana" boasts beautiful pictures and a soundtrack composed in part by rock producer Brian Eno.

Its message is loud and clear and one that ought to be heard.

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