



Jay Calderon/DN

Jeff Knoedler, a senior secondary education major, is directing "Boys' Life," a full-length Theatrix play, this weekend at the Temple Building.

UNL senior directs play, hopes to teach theater

Theatrix production provides experience for student director

By Joel Strauch
Senior Reporter

The opportunity to direct a full-length play is something for which most theater majors have to wait until after graduation.

But Jeff Knoedler, a senior secondary education major concentrating on English and theater, will be directing the Theatrix play "Boys' Life" this weekend.

"Directing a Theatrix play is pretty much an outlet for graduate directing students," Knoedler said. "Once in a while, an undergrad will do one of them."

"I am taking an independent study class and directing this play for that course."

Theatrix is part of the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance in the College of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"It's great. I've done a lot of acting in Theatrix," he said.

The program allows graduate and undergraduate students another level of performance opportunity to provide to student participants and their patrons.

"It provides an outlet for people to get experience if they can't get in on a mainstage play," he said. "It's like triple-A ball. A lot of people who direct mainstage productions come watch Theatrix performances to see up-and-coming talent," he said.

Theatrix uses minimal set, lighting and costume support and stages original and experimental works.

"I think that even though Theatrix is on a smaller scale and most people are less experienced, a lot of performances and productions are on par with the mainstage," Knoedler said.

"I've seen just as many Theatrix plays that have hit me as hard as mainstage productions. That's cool because you don't necessarily need a huge budget to put on a big production and have good theater."

Knoedler has participated in many areas of UNL theater. He acted in the "Caucasian

Chalk Circle," a mainstage production last spring; he directed the one-act "You Can't Trust the Male" as a requirement for Directing 203; and he also has been in a number of Theatrix plays.

This play will be the largest responsibility Knoedler has had in theater.

"Directing a play is a huge time commitment," he said. "But it's a good experience."

"For some people it's a real power trip to have that kind of creative power — to shape production how you want it."

But Knoedler said it wasn't a power trip for him.

"It's exciting to have the responsibility of getting this whole thing on its feet — creating this art."

Knoedler said he chose "Boys' Life" because he could relate to some of the characters' attitudes.

"The men are in a cruisin' and boozin' mentality. I can relate to that because I've been there and I think I've grown out of it," he said. "But I've learned to direct plays about stuff I know, and this seemed like a good choice."

But Knoedler doesn't agree with some attitudes in the play.

"The men are all pretty much assholes to the women. I'm worried that the audience will come away from the production thinking that I endorse the actions or attitudes of the characters in the play," he said.

"But I think there is a certain poetic justice in the play."

Knoedler also had to audition and select the actors and actresses for "Boys' Life."

"It was difficult to select the cast because there was so much talent," he said.

"Most of my cast are young actors with less experience," he said. "I thought that would be more of a challenge than it was, but they really surprised me. They were really eager to work."

Knoedler will graduate in the spring and plans to teach high school theater and direct high school productions.

"I'd like to teach during the year, and in the summer get work in community or repertory theaters," he said.

Activities, involvement UPC's goals

By Angie Goettsch
Staff Reporter

If you are looking for less expensive social activities and events, you can start by checking out the programs offered on campus.

The University Program Council strives to provide University of Nebraska-Lincoln students with cocurricular programming, entertainment and activities at discount prices.

The council also gives students an opportunity to develop leadership and become a part of a network community within a largely diversified university.

One UPC official said the council did not actively seek the events it sponsored.

"Usually, the agents come to us. We look at requests and decide which ones we will help with through event selections," Dorene Johnson, a sophomore advertising major and UPC event director, said. "We consider if there is a demand on campus for the event."

"The UPC also has an open forum, which is advertised through the

See UPC on 13

Play takes a look at 'Generation X'

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Three men in their late 20s are lost in a post-college world of mixed-up morals and bad relationships as they struggle to find out what it means to be a man.

This dose of "Generation X" reality is more than a scenario — it's "Boys' Life."

Howard Korder's theatrical comedy "Boys' Life," directed by Jeff Knoedler, will open Theatrix's 1994-95 season on Thursday.

Knoedler, a senior secondary education major concentrating on theater and English, said the play was a contemporary look at the maturity process of three men, Jack, Don and Phil.

"It focuses on issues and what it means to be a man and to develop a code of morality," Knoedler said.

Knoedler said that since college, the three friends never grew out of their "cruisin' and boozin'." During the course of a year, Phil and Don start to look for stability in other places, he said, while Jack maintains his irresponsible nature.

Much of the play's message is encoded in the men's relationships with women.

"The three guys are kind of a role model of how not to be for a stable relationship with women," he said.

Don (played by Robb Goff) forms a relationship with a waitress. She finds out he was cheating on her when she discovers a pair of panties in his room that aren't hers.

Phil (played by Colby Coash) never gets past dating women because he rushes them into relationships.

Both Don and Phil take their philosophies from Jack (played by Dana Wall), and they often land in trouble.

"Jack isn't ready to grow up yet. He's very manipulative and charismatic. He talks Don and Phil into doing things they don't want to do," Knoedler said.

"Jack wants them to still be cruisin' and bruisin', and they're trying to break away from that because they can't form stable relationships with women."

Wall, a freshman general studies major, said Jack was a "pleasure-seeking" sort of man.

"His moral standards are of his own creation," he said. "He decides

See THEATRIX on 13

Fall 1994
Theatrix schedule

"Boys' Life"
directed by Jeff Knoedler
today through Sunday,
Studio 301

Three One-Act Comedies
"Made for a Woman,"
"Bachelor Holiday," "The M Word"
directed by Channing Roos
Oct. 20-22, Studio 301

"Marks of Permanence"
directed by Charles Russell
Nov. 10-13, Studio Theatre

"The Pursuit of Anne"
directed by Julie Hagemeyer
Nov. 17-19, Studio Theatre

"Savage/Love"
directed by Jeanne Long
Dec. 1-3, Studio Theatre

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