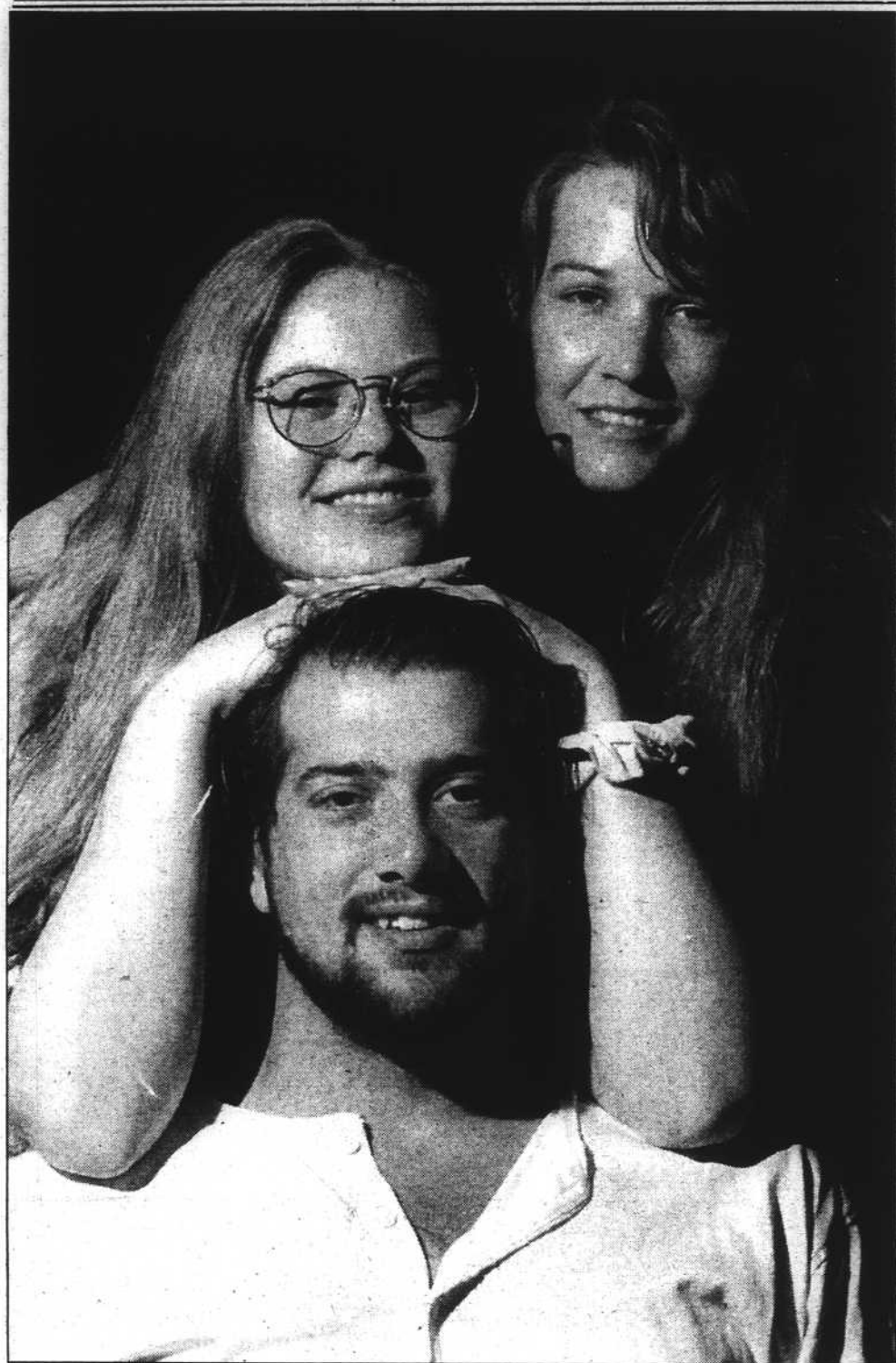


ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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Jeff Haller/DN
Jessica Haubrich, left, a senior theater major, and Kara Conrad and Patrick Tuttle, both Master of Fine Arts candidates, participated in Shakespeare productions over the summer.

Festival faces Summer of Shakespeare gives students valuable experience

By Gerry Beltz
Senior Reporter

Three UNL students got a bit of the Bard last summer.

Two Shakespeare festivals—one in Illinois, the other in Wisconsin—helped the three UNL Theatre Arts students gain a summer of experience.

Jessi Haubrich, a senior costume design major, and Kara Conrad, who, in December, will receive her Master of Fine Arts degree in scenic design, both attended the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Patrick Tuttle, a third-year graduate student enrolled in the M.F.A. acting program, joined the Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival.

Haubrich was asked to do the Illinois Shakespeare Festival by Janice Stauffer, Associate Professor of Theater Arts at UNL, who also worked at the festival. Haubrich worked on "Henry IV, Part One" and "Comedy of Errors."

"Janice got the job as the set assistant designer and prop mistress," Haubrich said, "and she brought me to be her assistant."

Conrad received her backing to join the Illinois festival from John Stark, one of her undergraduate professors at Arizona State University, and she focused on her tasks of assistant set designer and prop mistress.

Being in charge of props can call for some rather difficult requests, Conrad said, such as the very difficult task of creating a human head.

"I've never made a head before," Conrad said, "but it turned out to be very realistic. You always expect the bizarre."

Tuttle was in Wisconsin performing in works including "Romeo and Juliet," "Comedy of Errors" and "Tale of Cymbeline." He received word about the festival from a friend who was in it the summer before, he said.

"I took a trip last summer to see the shows, and I auditioned in February to be a part of it this

year."

All three agreed that the people they worked with helped make their experiences good ones.

"It was nice because we were surrounded by other M.F.A. students from across the country," Tuttle said. "We all had a common goal, and there was more of an understanding between all of us as to what we were going through."

Conrad said there were many other familiar Nebraska faces around Illinois this past summer.

"We knew who we were working for and what we were getting into. The whole Nebraska mafia was at Illinois this year," Conrad said, laughing.

Haubrich said, "We actually had a very wide range of people working in the shop. There were

grads, undergrads and ladies from the community who like to sew and know how to make costumes."

Although Shakespeare is one of theater's most celebrated playwrights, none of the three felt intimidated in the work they were involved in.

"It's not as reverent as people think," Tuttle said. "He's simpler than that."

"It's more in his writing that made him a classic, not his ideas. It is simple circumstances with beautiful languages."

Conrad said, "It's just another show."

Haubrich added, "Shakespeare's never really shaken me off. It's very work-intensive; to do that on a limited budget with a limited crew, now that's what's intimidating."

Haubrich did note one particular instance over the summer that caused some excitement during a performance of "Henry IV, Part One."

"We had Falstaff wearing a Fat Pad (a big, stuffed body suit), which he was wearing under his costume," Haubrich said, "and he almost fainted backstage."

See THEATER on 13

'Illusions' script lacks punch

'Quantum Leap' star, spectacular effects, can't conquer plot

By Brian Priesman
Film Critic

Not even the multi-talented Scott Bakula can make enough magic to save United Artists' new film, "Lord of Illusions."

Producer, director, writer and all-around horror-meister Clive Barker has assembled an incredible cast and crew to bring his story about the nature of magic and illusion to the screen.

Unfortunately he forgot to bring his writing ability. "Lord of Illusions" is the story of private detective Harry D'Amour (Bakula) who, while on a routine case of insurance fraud, stumbles onto a reality-shattering mystery involving world-famous magician Philip Swann and his wife, Dortha, who are played with stunning depth by Kevin J. O'Connor and Famke Janssen.

Barker had a wonderful idea for this movie—make a film about real-life magic, except the only two people who can use it are the psychotic leader

of a death cult and a mentally deranged former student of the cult.

The movie has great potential throughout the first half, moving nicely toward a scary and shocking climax. But sadly, after an accident during a magic trick involving Swann and some falling swords, the movie veers off course, losing all sense of plot and continuity.

From then on, the movie becomes a showcase for special effects and individual performances. And the effects aren't bad. Some are visually spectacular and will blow the audience away. One in particular includes a geometrically designed creature that chases D'Amour and Dortha around Swann's house, a fire-snake that Swann uses to attack all sorts of people, and a kick-butt death scene for the evil cult.

Bakula is good as D'Amour, the gritty New York private investigator who, no matter how hard he tries, cannot seem to stay away from the occult. Barker has created a well-fleshed-out character with a dark past. D'Amour has one of the most interesting tattoos ever seen on screen.

Bakula is able to bring a sense of heroism to the role, but he never seems able to shake the image of his role of Sam Beckett in TV's "Quantum Leap." One half of you expects "Al" to walk out of a wall and tell him that he can leap to his next assignment.

Kevin O'Connor's performance as Philip Swann is downright spooky.

The Facts

Film: "Lord of Illusions"

Stars: Scott Bakula, Kevin O'Connor, Famke Janssen

Director: Clive Barker

Rating: R

Grade: C+

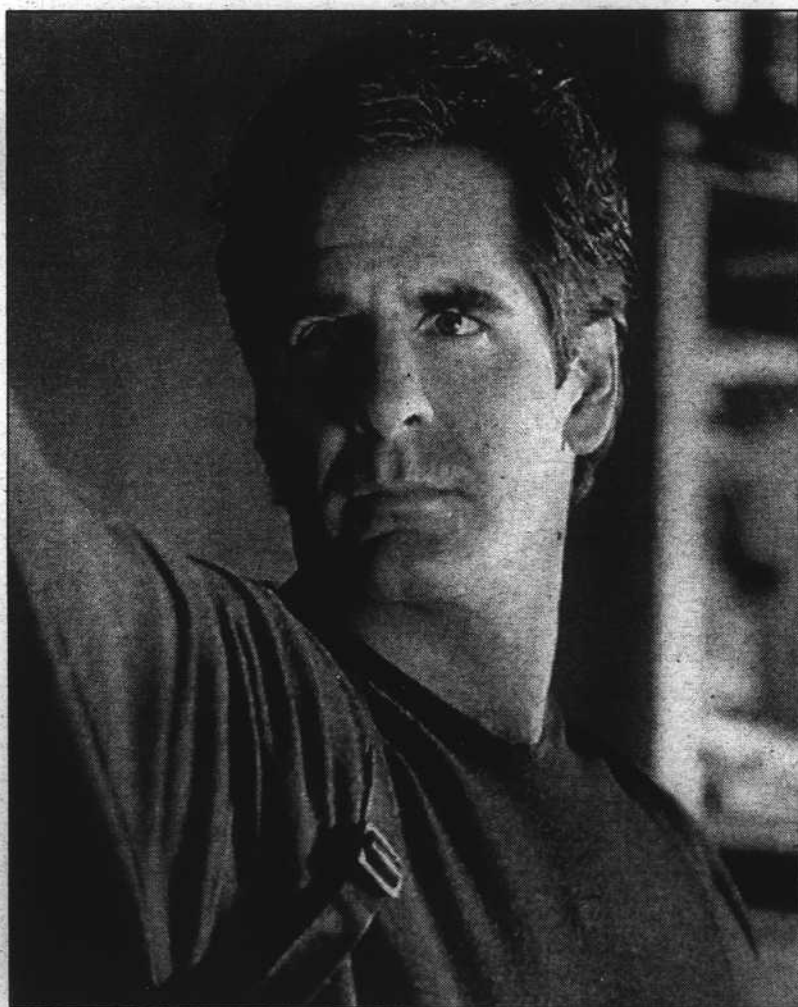
Five Words: Film noir thriller lacks magic.

The audience identifies with Swann and where he is coming from. And his eyes! They never really seem to make contact with anything, which is a very spooky touch.

Speaking of eyes, Barry Del Sherman, who plays the evil Butterfield, has the creepiest eyes to grace the screen in a long time. Sherman's performance is superb, bringing an almost Renfield-like quality to the part.

Famke Janssen, who plays Swann's wife Dortha, is great. She could have been even better if her costumes had been a little more tasteful and her lines actually had been complete sentences. Still, it's easy to see why she was chosen to play opposite Pierce Brosnan in the next James Bond movie, due out this fall.

See LORD on 13



Courtesy of United Artists

Scott Bakula stars as private investigator Harry D'Amour in the supernatural thriller "Lord of Illusions."