

Season opener explores loss

By Gerry Beltz
Senior Reporter

With a little help from three tons of sand, the UNL fall theater season opens tonight with Michael Brady's "To Gillian, On Her 37th Birthday," directed by UNL assistant professor Paul Steger.

Hauling all of that sand up to the Studio Theatre on the third floor of the Temple Building was an "interesting feat," Steger said. "We loaded up the back of a truck with sand and brought it up in wheelbarrows," he said, "much to the chagrin of the custodial staff."

This romantic-drama looks at a group of people who have gathered together for a summer weekend at a beach cottage and will find paths out of a terrible memory they all share.

Steger said he read the play when it first came out in 1984 and thought about it for a number of years, but never received the chance to do it.

"However, I thought it would fit in well here at UNL with the training we do here," he said, "and it's a good showcase for the actors."

"This is a play that many people should be able to find a connection with," Steger said.

"I think it's kind of about loss," he said. "It's about something everyone has gone through — a stage of life where you are depending on others to help you accept a loss."

Despite the brief amount of time in which this play has been introduced (only 23 rehearsals total), Steger said the cast and crew had done well.

"The actors have done an incredible amount of work in a short period of time," he said.

Steger jokingly added that any concerns with the budget just needed to be looked at in the right frame of mind.

"They aren't budget limitations,

"This is a play that many people should be able to find a connection with."

PAUL STEGER

UNL assistant professor

they're budget opportunities," he said with a smile.

This isn't a play that will change the world, Steger said, but it is a "life-affirming play" with a message.

"Through friends and those who love us," he said, "we can get through any difficult time in our lives."

The play will be performed in the Studio Theatre in the Temple Building at 12th and R streets and will run tonight through Saturday and Oct. 3 through Oct. 7. Tickets are \$6 for students with ID, \$7 for faculty, staff and senior citizens and \$9 for others.

Strawberry

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walls and posters. Diego's work is banned.

"Strawberry and Chocolate" is brought alive by Perugorria's amazing portrayal of Diego. His lustful looks at David, his intentionally clumsy seduction attempts and even his preference for strawberry ice cream over "more masculine" chocolate ice cream makes his role especially humorous.

Although the language and subtitles may present a barrier to catching all the flavor of the film, "Strawberry and Chocolate" is enjoyable.

It plays at the Mary Riepma Ross Theater tonight through Sunday and Oct. 5 through Oct. 7.

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