

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1998

## 'Picasso' parodies fictional meeting of past geniuses

By LIZA HOLTMEIER Staff writer

When most people think of Steve Martin, they think of the stumbling, bumbling idiot from "The Jerk" or the wild and crazy guy from "Saturday Night Live."

Few would think of him as a critically acclaimed playwright.

But in 1996, Martin won the New York Outer Critics' Circle Awards for "Best Play" and "Best Playwright" for the play "Picasso at the Lapin Agile."

Tonight, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Theatre Arts and Dance will introduce Lincoln audiences to the other side of Martin with its production of his award-winning play.

"Picasso at the Lapin Agile" places a 25-yearold Albert Einstein and a 23-year-old Pablo Picasso in a Parisian café called the Lapin Agile in 1904. The two meet before Einstein has written his "Special Theory of Relativity" and before Picasso has painted his first cubist work "Les Desmoiselle D'Avignon."

The play's events, which are fictitious, explore what would have happened if the two young geniuses had met. In an hour and a half, Einstein and Picasso make predictions about the 20th century, comment on the dynamic worlds of art and science and discuss objects of lust and love.

Cast members of the play said the show's thought-provoking content will shock audience members familiar with Martin's zanier work.

"We identify Steve Martin as a goofball," said Paul Steger, the play's director. "We really wouldn't think of him as a serious individual. But he's really created a very complex play that's hidden underneath silliness."

Greg Peters, who plays Freddy, the bartender of the Lapin Agile, added that Martin's greatest skill was his ability to be subtly profound while incredibly funny.

"The comedy never stops. It never comes down. And then at the end, you think, 'Wow! That really had something to say!"" Peters said.

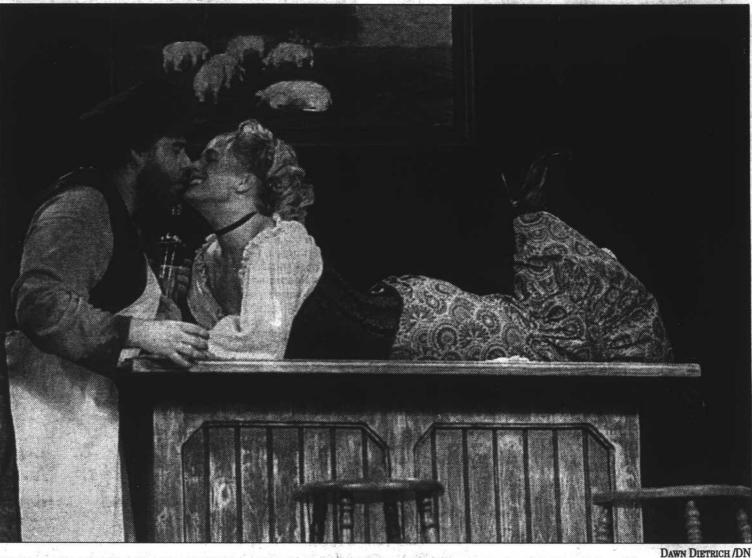
And Martin has something to say about everything: painting, physics, sex and fame. At the same time, Peters said, he emphasizes the thrill inherent in the communication between humans.

"I think we've lost a lot of the emphasis on that with television and the Internet. You can sit in a room and never talk to people," he said. "In this play, you see how exciting it can be when you put two guys in a room together and let them talk."

In "Picasso at the Lapin Agile," the characters not only talk to each other -- they debate each other fervently. Their zeal becomes a driving force in the play.

"The play shows that if you're going to do anything, you should do it with a zest and a passion. If you don't have that passion, it's not worth doing,' Steger said.

Steger, who will be leaving the theater faculty



PATTY DILLON, who plays Germaine in "Picasso at the Lapin Agile," flirts with Freddy, who is played by Greg Peters. The award-winning play written by actor/comedian Steve Martin opens tonight for a students-only show. manist 机路机路 代码

in January, said that because of the passionate theme, Martin's play was an appropriate finish to his work at UNL

Since he joined the faculty in 1991, Steger said he has tried to find ways of harnessing that commitment and communicating it to his students

The cast members of this show, many of whom also had Steger for class, said his passion had a profound effect on them personally and professionally

Ryan Johnston, who plays Picasso, said Steger's enthusiasm and energy motivated him as an actor and increased his dedication to the art of theater

"He always stretched me, and I always trusted him unfailingly," Johnston said. "He's more than a director or professor."

After moving to Los Angeles, Steger will tour the southwestern and eastern United States for 10

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> PAUL STEGER director of "Picasso at the Lapin Agile"

months in a show written by two of his friends. During his weeks off, he will teach stunt workshops and stage fighting workshops in Seattle and Las Vegas.

In honor of Steger's work at UNL, the department will hold a special opening-night celebration for him.

"Picasso at the Lapin Agile" opens tonight for

students only and offers a discount ticket price of \$5.

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The play runs through Saturday and again next week, Nov. 3-7. Shows are in the Temple Building, 12th and R streets, and begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for students, \$9 for faculty/staff/senior citizens and \$10 for all others. For reservations, call the Temple Box Office at (402) 472-2073.

## BY SARAH BAKER Senior staff writer

As if choosing a costume isn't hard enough, the decision of where to spend Halloween night showing off that longdebated disguise still looms ahead.

But don't worry -- many local businesses are sponsoring all sorts of spooky events that promise to please almost anyone.

With masquerade balls, costume contests and rock 'n' roll concerts, a little of everything is going on somewhere in Lincoln every night through Saturday.

For those who are too old to go trick-or-treating but still have the yen bands will cram into to get dolled-up in costume, many venues are holding events where part of the cover charge is a scary get-up.

Club 1427, 1427 O St., is throwing its annual Halloween party, open to those 21 and over. You must be in costume to get in the door, and there is a \$5 ' Grand Island. cover charge. The festivities begin at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday

For those who still like to get in acts The Black Dahlias costume but need a little monetary and Fullbown for a sec

incentive to do so, Temptations Dance Club, 1600 O St., has a costume contest beginning at 7 p.m. Cash prizes will be awarded for the best-dressed ghouls

Guitars and Cadillacs, 5400 O St., has its costume contest Friday night, along with tunes provided by High Caliber, a local country cover band.

The scary rock bands at Knickerbockers, 901 O St., are actually celebrating a holiday this time and plan an all out spook-fest this week-

Friday night five Knickerbockers to launch the weirdest of weekends: the Criminals. Zeke, Powerwagon, Fullblown and The

Saturday night the bar will feature local

ond consecutive evening.

Ave., continues the tradition of Saturday showings of

MATT HANEY/DN

Local businesses prepare Halloween treats, scares

"Rocky Horror Picture Show" but has scary sights. The Joyo Theater, 6102 Havelock a Halloween treat in its bag for the weekend.

> The film, which begins at midnight, will be preceded by a live perforthe mance from Powerwagon and Wide on the theater stage.

Doors open at 9 p.m., and the ll-ages show has a \$5 cover.

Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St., is saving its Halloween festivities for Sunday night with Wide and gothglam band the Polyplush

Cats.

For those who may be looking for less alcoholinduced Halloween madness, don't despair. Plenty of wholesome Halloween events also are planned this weekend.

A local Halloween tradition, the Sertoma Ride of Terror, takes place tonight and Friday night at Grandpa John's Pumpkin Patch, 4801 N.W. Highway 34.

filled hayrack ride along a trail of requirements.

Admission is \$5 per rider, and the ides begin as soon as darkness falls.

Pioneers Park Nature Center, located at 2740 A St., also sponsors fall havrack rides from Nov. 8 to Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required.

Although it's a drive, Vala's Pumpkin Patch, located at 12101 S. 180th St. in Omaha, offers some of the best hayrack rides available, along with a great selection of pumpkins still ripe in the fields.

Vala's is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Admission is \$5.

Although Halloween itself only lasts one day, there are enough events going on to keep most spooks out of too much trouble for the entire week-

There's also plenty of chances to get your money's worth on that costume you rented out of last-minute desperation.

For more information on any of hese events, please call the venues to The Ride of Terror is a fright- find out prices, times or costume