

Writer Brad Fraser

and
the
effects of

SEX, LOVE & AIDS

on his Life

Stories by Liza Holtmeier

Photos by Rick Townley



DAVID, played by Jude Hickey, tends to the bloody wound of Bernie, played by Eric Moyer. The play, "Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love," opens to students tonight and to the general public on Friday.

Many mistake sex for love.

Its intimacy and intensity can fill the aching void for those searching for affection — but only temporarily.

In "Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love," seven characters struggle to define what love is.

Tonight, the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln opens its production of the play, written by Canadian playwright Brad Fraser.

His primary characters, Candy and David, are two roommates entangled in several destructive relationships, seeking to fulfill their temporary needs. David believes love doesn't exist, while Candy believes it's the only thing that does.

Consequently, Candy finds herself torn between a married man and her lesbian lover, while David questions his feelings for his best friend Bernie and his young companion Kane.

Amid this personal turmoil, a serial killer terrorizes the characters' peaceful town, raping and mutilating young girls.

With its bold depiction of sex and violence, the play breaks new ground in the field of daringness. Audiences see directly into the bedrooms and secret closets of these characters, and few personal details are held back.

"(The playwright) hits a lot of really touchy, contemporary issues, and he does

Theatre Preview The Facts

What: "Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love"

Where: Studio Theatre, Temple Building

When: 8:00 p.m. tonight through Saturday and April 20-24

Cost: \$6 students, \$9 faculty/staff/senior citizens, \$10 general admission

The Skinny: Play provides a frank portrayal of the often twisted search for love and fulfillment

it very uncompromisingly. Nothing's sugar-coated. Nothing's bullshit," said Courtney Shaw, who plays Candy.

Fraser said he wrote the play as an antidote to the superficial theater he had seen performed. Fraser wanted to write a play straight from the gut — without censoring or prettifying for the stage.

"Whenever you get to a point where you say, 'I can't say it,' you have to say it. Whenever you get to a point where you say, 'I can't do it,' you have to do it," Fraser said.

Fraser has followed this advice as he has gone on to write other plays. In "The Ugly Man," Fraser adapted the Jacobean classic "The Changeling" to prove how long sex and violence had existed in the theater. With "Poor Super Man," Fraser used sexually explicit content to depict a relationship between two men and its affect on the women in their lives.

In "Human Remains," Fraser put sex in all its various forms on the stage. The

Fraser lecture addresses AIDS, gay community

In the early 1980s, AIDS was a distant and rumored disease — a sort of myth affecting unknown people in unknown circles.

A decade later, AIDS was no longer a specter on the horizon. It was a personal, life-threatening issue, affecting people close and people loved.

Last night, playwright Brad Fraser presented a lecture exploring the growth of AIDS and its impact on his personal and artistic life, called "The Effect of AIDS on my Life."

Surrounded by the Great Plains Art Collection in Love Library, Fraser traced the AIDS epidemic from its early days to its current wave of infection. Amid the societal and cultural impacts, Fraser described the disease's effects on his life as a gay man and a playwright.

"AIDS has affected anything and everything I've done since I first heard about it in 1982," Fraser said.

That year, Fraser was a young man in Canada, full of life, vitality and youthful sexual energy. AIDS was a "strange, gay disease" about which the gay community furtively whispered.

"For my generation, STDs are a joke," Fraser thought at the time. "There's a pill to cure everything."

A few years later, attitudes had changed. The disease was found to be sexually transmitted. Sore throats and constant fatigue became reasons to worry.

"Suddenly, we're all monitoring ourselves and each

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