



Taking the theater to 2000

Comedies, dramas pave way to theater department's Main Stage 2000 season

BY EMILY PYEATT
Staff writer

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Department of Theatre Arts opens its 99th Main Stage season this fall.

The season features six shows including satiric comedy, dramatic exploration of relationships and musical theater.

The season opens in late September with A.R. Gurney's "The Dining Room." Featuring a powerful script of 18 scenes, the play depicts the family relationships of a host of characters. Set in each family's dining room, the play traverses American social mores from the Depression to the '80s. The play runs in the Howell Theatre through the beginning of October.

The next show, "The Lion in Winter," opens Oct. 21 in the Studio Theatre.

Written by James Goldman, the play examines the dysfunctional family of King Henry II. Goldman follows these 12th century royals as they confront a complicated marriage and the unfavorable festivities that follow.

Anton Chekhov's play "Three

Sisters" follows in November in the Howell Theatre.

"Three Sisters" poignantly recounts the relationships between the Prozorov sisters and the people in their lives. Set in a provincial town and covering several years, the play strives to provide a link between hope and fulfillment.

The second semester opens in February with the comedic "All in the Timing" by David Ives.

A unique and bizarre production, "All in the Timing" is composed of six one-act comedies. Ives' satirical wit serves as an in-your-face exploration of a world fueled by conversation. The play runs in the Howell Theatre.

"Nebraska Premieres," a new play by a yet-to-be-named Nebraska author, follows "All in the Timing" in March. The UNL theater department and the Nebraska Repertory Theatre will co-produce the show.

In April, the School of Music, the theater department and the Lied Center collaborate for the classic musical "Fiddler on the Roof." Based on Sholem Aleichem stories, with music by Jerry Bock and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, "Fiddler on the Roof" is the timeless tale of family love tested by powerful outside forces.

In addition to the Main Stage season, the department will present its second stage

Theatrical season to be announced early this semester.

For more information on the UNL Department of Theatre Arts' season, call the Temple Box Office at (402) 472-2073.

Recruitment is key for new theater chairman

JOSH NICHOLS
Staff writer

Jerry Elwell wants to stack the University of Nebraska-Lincoln theater department the way the athletic program does the Huskers.

"I believe we need to recruit theater students like the football team recruits players," the new theater department chairman said. "My goal is to make the theater department a place everyone wants to go."

Elwell, whose last position was at Marshall University in West Virginia, said vigorous recruitment tactics could make the UNL theater program the best around.

"There is no reason Nebraska can't have the best drama program of any state-supported university in the nation," Elwell said.

The college has the facilities and talented faculty. Now, it needs to work even harder to get good, talented students to come to the school, Elwell said.

Elwell's improvement tactics at past universities have included financial incentives, talent awards and raised standards for students accepted into the college.

At his previous position as professor and chairman of the department of theater at Marshall University, Elwell instituted departmental talent awards. These awards allotted \$27,000 annually to students based on talent and performance.

At Marshall, Elwell also created a workshop for new plays called "Playworks," created a new minor in Design and Technology, and developed a sophomore review, in which students evaluated departmental majors after completion of their sophomore year.

Before working at Marshall, Elwell was a professor at Aurora University in Illinois and Mississippi State where he taught a variety of theater, play writing and acting classes.



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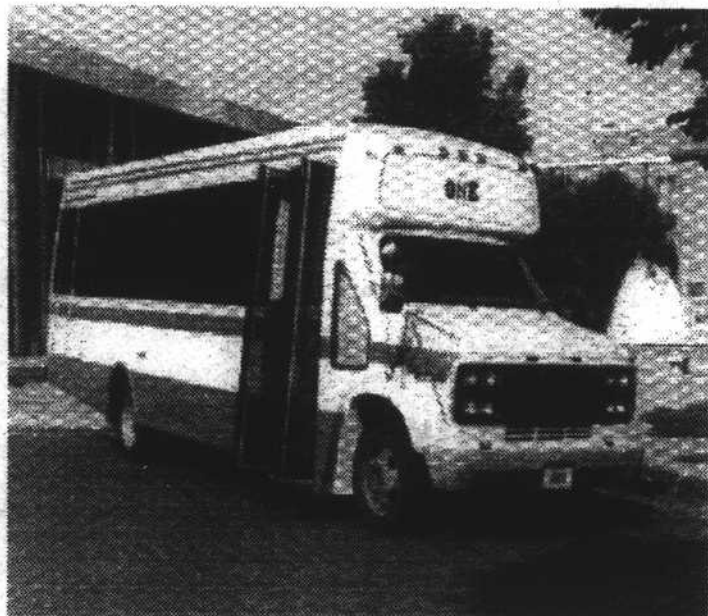
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