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Repertory Theatre offers twist to summer season

Shelley Mika

Staff writer

Theater buffs may have come to rely on the Nebraska Repertory Theatre's summer schedule to spice up the season. And the theater will continue to entertain patrons, but with a few changes.

The Rep. will present two plays, but this year both productions will be presented in rotating repertory.

"Rotating Repertory hasn't happened in ten years," said Julie Hagemeyer, Theatre Manager at UNL. "The cast and crew will move from one script to another."

Hagemeyer said that although this will be challenging for those involved in the play, the two performances do have similarities.

"Last Night of Ballyhoo" is set in the 1930's and "Picnic" is set in the 50's. "Both (plays) are more innocent," Hagemeyer said. "People had a different perspective on life—not quite as global. 'Picnic' is also pretty insular."

The relative innocence and myopic nature inherent in both

plays comes to light even in a brief plot summary.

Set in 1939, "Last Night of Ballyhoo" is the story of Atlanta's high society German Jews. At the center of the play is the Freitag family, who are more concerned about the last night of the theatre "Ballyhoo" than Hitler's invasion of Poland.

"Picnic's" setting is of a more local nature, as it tells the story of neighbors who live in all-female households. This commonality provides a challenge for Hal Carter, who enters the scene and upsets the entire group.

Another commonality between the plays are the awards bestowed upon each.

"Last Night of Ballyhoo" won the 1997 Tony Award for Best Play and was written by Alfred Uhry, author of "Driving Miss Daisy."

Written by William Inge, "Picnic" won the Pulitzer Prize and the Critics' Circle Award.

"I think both plays really have a broad appeal," Hagemeyer said. "People who are in their 20's as well as people in their 80's who have been going to the theater all their lives will enjoy

them. Both have won many awards and are quality and proven scripts."

Not only do the plays have the potential to appeal to a wide audience, Hagemeyer said the scripts also allow for a diverse cast. "There's a lot of opportunity for both guest artists and artists we're training," Hagemeyer said.

Among the guest artists involved in this year's schedule is Eugene Anthony, who will share his acting talents in "Last Night of Ballyhoo" and will direct "Picnic." Anthony's background includes Broadway performances, national tours and appearances on "All My Children" and "Law and Order."

"We've also used local talent," Hagemeyer said. "The Nebraska Rep. is trying to boost its training component."

Hagemeyer said that both local actors and those involved with the University have roles. Among the varied talents will be Dick Nielson Howard, who appeared in last summer's "Death Trap," Shirley Mason, the head of acting at the University, as well as advanced students from the Theater department.

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NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

Lincoln's Cajun menu expands with newcomer Buzzard Billy's

J.J. Harder

Staff writer

First there was George's. Then came Kerry O'Ryan's. Now we've got Buzzard Billy's. Lincoln's recent Cajun craze makes me wonder is Harry Connick, Jr. is coming to town or if we're just really hungry for some jambalaya. While I'd prefer to listen to the famous crooner at the Lied Center, the burgeoning bayou barrage isn't too bad.

Buzzard Billy's, the newest of the restaurants, brings some Creole competition to O'Ryan's in the Haymarket. From my first impression, I think it will not only defeat O'Ryan's, BB will steal from neighboring Ruby Tuesday's wallet and become a Lincoln favorite.

BB is in a chain of four, with other locations in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Des Moines, and Waco, Texas. It's not exactly a wish list of places to live, but Lincoln fits well enough with the others. BB has cuisine similar to

George's in a Hi-Way Diner atmosphere staffed with an Econ 212 class. Although BB exceeds the unofficial maximum for frat brothers waiting tables, the experience still manages to turn out well.

Hard wood floors and tables with Dukes of Hazzard cards under the glass make for an interesting bar feel. Various commercial food and beer signs from throughout the past century line the walls. Armadillos hang from the ceiling fans and classic rock emanates from the speakers. Once you're seated, you'll be given ten-inch water glasses and a probably friendly welcome.

The menu is eclectic by Lincoln standards, but not with the aforementioned trend. Gator Fingers (no, not actually alligator digits) can compete with George's Gator Balls and beat O'Ryan's frog legs for best Southern appetizer in town. Yes, they taste like chicken, but probably more like shrimp. The fried batter eliminates that fishy aftertaste. But be on the

BUZZARD BILLY'S

REVIEW

WHERE: 8th St., between P and Q streets

WHAT: Cajun, Creole meals for \$7 to 15

BOTTOM LINE: Swooping into second for Cajun

lookout for gristle. They were good, but the portion is very small.

BB's entrees run the gamut, from pasta to burgers to traditional Cajun food. Don't get a burger; not because they aren't good, but because you shouldn't be eating a plain old Nebraska hamburger if you're in a Cajun restaurant. The pasta is aesthetically the best of the entrees, but the owners insist-

Please see **BUZZARD** on 7