THE ACTOR’S NIGHTMARE: A PLAY WITHIN A PLAY

The third Studio Series production of the 2006-2007 NEIU Stage Center season. The Actor’s Nightmare by Christopher Durang, will be presented on February 13 and 15 at 7:30 PM. Veteran Stage Center actor Christopher Leonard (The Real Inspector Hound, Life Is a Dream, Dracula, The Waiting Room, Much Ado About Nothing, Was He Anyone? and The Birthday Party) will direct.

The leading role will be played by another veteran to the Stage Center, NEIU student Patrick Garone (The Real Inspector Hound, Life Is a Dream, Boy Gets Girl, Picasso at the Lapin Agile, Much Ado About Nothing, and The Birthday Party). Other NEIU students in the cast include Jeff Roll (Dracula, Much Ado About Nothing and Was He Anyone?) and Elizabeth Roig (Simply Maria). Rounding out the cast are Chicago actors Stephanie Wyatt (The Birthday Party) and Michelle Weserber.

Plot synopsis: The Actor’s Nightmare is a play within a play. Having casually wandered onstage, George is informed that one of the actors, Eddie, has been in a auto accident and he must replace him immediately. Unfortunately, George does not recall attending a single rehearsal and believes that he is an accountant! To further complicate things, no one seems to know what play is being performed and George (costumed as Hamlet) finds himself in the middle of scenes from Private Lives, Hamlet some play by Samuel Beckett, and A Man for All Seasons. Please join us in Building F, Room 109 for The Actor’s Nightmare. $3 admission, free with current NEIU faculty or student ID.

Children’s Theatre Workshop 2007: Destination Mudgeville

GARY GRINKLES’ BATTLES WITH WRINKLES and Other Troubles in Mudgeville

Written by Stefan Graves Lanfer
Directed by Kat Matassarin
Children’s Theatre Workshop

This performance will be presented for 1st through 4th graders. Mudgeville is an unusual town, where fears big and small, real and imagined keep everyone hidden away in their homes... until Martin moves to town and something magical happens. The dates for these performances are March 14th to April 20th on MWF from 10:30-11:30 am.

If you are interested in your children’s school program, please share this information with them. Have them try to book now, seating is limited. Northwestern, as it has done for the past eleven years, charges $3.00 per student with free admission for adult supervisors.

Due to previous last minute cancellations, the university has established a policy where payment is due in advance. Cancellations made less than 2 weeks prior to booked performances will result in full forfeiture of payment.

The theatre has a seating capacity of 100. To book or for more information regarding the production or the Children’s Theatre Workshop, please contact Kat Matassarin at KMataassari@aoi.com or 773.442.5924.

Suggestions are being accepted for the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 Stage Center Seasons.

Suggestions drop off locations are located either in the fine arts building (on the bulletin board), 2nd floor, or Stage Center Theatre in the P wing. Submissions are also accepted via email to A-Antsaraman@neiu.edu. Please include the title of the play and playwright.

One-Act Playwriting Contest

The Competition Begins....

Prize: One-act play will be produced as the final production of the Stage Center Theatre’s Spring 2008 Studio Series.

Deadline: To be announced.

Everyone is welcome to submit a contest entry.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR STAGE CENTER:

The Actor’s Nightmare
February 13 & 15
1:40 & 7:30 PM

Proof
Stage Center
February 22-24 &
March 1-2 @ 7:30 PM

“And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow”
Reception Hall
March 1-2 @ 7:30 PM

Gary Grinkles Battles with Wrinkles and Other Troubles in Mudgeville
Stage Center
March 14 - April 20
MWF 10:30-11:30 AM

Pitbull Theater
F109
April 10 & 13 @
1:40 & 7:30 PM

The Minotaur Twins
Stage Center
April 19-21, 26-28 & May 3-5
@ 7:30 PM
A World Premiere at Northeastern

“And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow”

Written by Steven Brown & Michael Ullrat
Directed by Jim Blair

An Intelligent Perspective of the 1925 Scopes “Monkey Trial”

The world premiere of “And on the Eighth Day: Bryan v. Darrow” will be presented in The Recital Hall at Northeastern Illinois University on the evenings of March 1-3, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free for all NEIU students, staff, and faculty with NEIU ID. General admission is $12.00 and $9.00 for senior citizens and students from other universities.

Two NEIU staff members, Dr. Steve Brown (co-writer) is Professor of Educational Leadership and Jim Blair (director), who teaches theater in the Dept. of Communication, Media, and Theatre are involved in this production. In addition, NEIU student, Jennifer Nowell (stage manager), is completing her B.A. in Mathematics.

Brown, who co-wrote this original stage play with Michael Ullrat, and director Jim Blair have won two prestigious awards: The Wisconsin Association of Broadcasters and The State Bar of Wisconsin in 2006 and 2007. In 2005 the live radio drama of “And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow was broadcast on WGTB Public Radio in Kenosha, WI.

What’s This Play All About?

William Jennings Bryan (portrayed by Rob Lamont) and Clarence Darrow (Terry Lawler) square off as the high-profile lawyers who share their highly volatile and deep rooted passion for their own points of view. Bryan, the Great Commoner, believed in the Biblical presentation of creationism, while Darrow, an atheist, supported the theory of evolution.

The basis for the Scopes trial was laid when the Tennessee State Legislature passed the Butler Act - which took effect on March 21st, 1925.

The essence of the Act was that it made it illegal for anyone: “…to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals” in any state-funded educational institution.

In this ongoing discussion of the societal issue of faith and science, what forum was selected in 1925 to present the debate? A courtroom.

Lamont was an advocate for the respective sides of the issue. A live radio broadcast from Chicago’s very own WGN Radio was invited for the first time into a court room.

This 1925 trial brought the proceedings directly into the living rooms of people who, for the most part, had never heard what actually goes on during a trial.

A Final Word

Much of the misunderstanding and misinformation surrounding the trial of John T. Scopes probably comes from a fifty year old stage play, and perhaps even more importantly, the film and the made-for-TV movies it has spawned: “Inherit the Wind.”

This well known film starred Spencer Tracy, Frederick March, Harry Morgan, Gene Kelly, and Richard Crenna. The stage play and screenplay were written by Jerome Lawrence and Robert Edwin Lee.

Eighty-two years ago, in July 1925, the conflict between religion and science in the public school system of Dayton, TN erupted into a courtroom drama that prompted Bryan vs. Darrow. The Scopes trial - or "Monkey Trial," as it was called - dominated headlines across the country. The trial lasted just a week, but the questions it raised are as divisive now as they were back then.

“And on the Eighth Day: Bryan v. Darrow” is an original stage play that presents an "intelligent perspective" on a topic that generates great interest, controversy, and passion.

Once again, the play will be presented in The Recital Hall at Northeastern Illinois University on the evenings of March 1-3, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free for all NEIU students, staff, and faculty. For more information on tickets, please call (847) 894-5218.

The website for the play can be found at www.8thdayplay.com.