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James Rogers

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"Cinderella"

Editor's note: No fairy tale has so captured the hearts and minds of the small children worldwide. Yet no age group is immune from its magic, witness the outpourings of adults in in poetry and music on the subject.

Journal News Service (JNS)

When word got around that Rodgers and Hammerstein, Julie Andrews, and Cinderella were teaming up to produce a fairy tale musical, CBS immediately bought the airing rights for \$300,000. Besides the enormous fee for a project not yet started, CBS promised the most elaborate TV hook-up in history.

Ultimately, on March 3, 1957, the show "Cinderella" was seen by an audience of 107 million viewers. This date was the 14th anniversary of "Oklahoma", another R and D musical blockbuster, which won the Pulitzer Prize.

The "Oklahoma" story line lay close to real life, and sans chorus lines, which caused the impresario Michael Todd to remark: "No girls, no gags, no good."

Todd was wrong! "Oklahoma" was an enormous success both critically and for its financial backers. A \$20,000 investment in the show over a 10-year period was calculated to produce a return of more than six and a half million!

Todd is gone, and his quip lives on as does "Cinderella, but to a decidedly non-Broadway musical history. The fact is the fairy tale set to music never saw the "great White Way." Seven years later CBS filmed the show with Celeste Holm as the Fairy Godmother, and Leslie Ann Warren as Cinderella. Since then it has become a perennial television event, and it is produced hundreds of times each year by high schools, colleges, community and professional theatre and musical groups.

UNI Opera Production Company has decided that Northeastern Illinois University is to have a production of "Cinderella" also, and by doing so has added yet another major production to the school's list of full-scale events. There will be 2 performances at the UNI auditorium at 8 PM on the evenings of Friday 22 and Saturday 23 of November.

Mitch Thomas has been cast as Cinderella. Thomas has been seen previously in the 1984 production of Purcell's "Faerie Queen" as Daphne, and in "Street Scene" as Emma Jones, a Kurt Weill opera given this past Spring. Greg Langreder is Prince Charming.

Other members of the cast are Phillip Hale as the King, Dorothy Steiner as the Queen, Greta Pfeifer as the Stepmother, Karen Peterson and Nancy Newman as stepsisters Portia and Joy, Wanda Sowell as the Godmother, Ken Tremback as the Herald, Jeff Klepper as the Footman/Minister, Paul Margolis as the Chef, Douglas Lewit as the Steward, and Jim Goodrich as the Old Beau.



Richard Sandoval

Journal News Service (JNS)

Richard Sandoval was chosen "Best Actor" by his peers for his role as the tormented brother of Lincoln's assassin in "Edwin Booth." Sandoval was recently in the Pegasus production of "The Devil's Disciple" as Christy Dungeon. He will be seen next in the Steppenwolf play "The Diary of Anne Frank."

The story of theatre awards is on the third page inside.

INSIDE: David Laske surveys

17 Chicago theatres

GUEST FORUM....

Editor's note: David Laske is a UNI student and a devotee of the theatre.

Introduction.-Contemporary theatre management is made up of more than dramatic productions. As never before, the survival of non-professional and many community theatres rests upon "getting the message" out to potential patrons and establishing a loyal following. Institutions of high learning which give course work in theatre management are generally unable to address the kinds of advertising techniques and methods used in non-professional theatres because of both time constraints in the curriculum and the apparent lack of demand for such intensive studies.

Nevertheless, advertising is a critical part of the total theatre scene because it has the potential to bring in the kinds of theatre patrons who make the difference between the final establishment of a theatre or its possible demise. Modern theatre practises are often adapted from conventional business techniques. However, highly trained and talented artists do not necessarily have a sustained interest in the "business side" of theatre, and such more mundane activities are generally delegated to volunteers and "staff." These well-meaning and dedicated people apparently often replicate the kinds of practices and policies which they have experienced, or heard about in other theatrical environments.

My introduction to this kind of "theatre" happened several years ago when I was approached by a playwright who sought my advice on the funding of his theatre. He had twenty active volunteers who prized his talents as a writer and were willing to contribute to the establishment of a company. I was familiar with his work and agreed to discuss budgetary problems with him.

This discussion turned into 7 hours of business strategy. I was amazed that a man who had spent so much time in the mass media had so little understanding about the costs, effectiveness, and problems of theatre advertising. I found myself spending more time trying to get him to explore some other plan of attack regarding his advertising budget (70% of budget) than in working out general strategy.

In subsequent years I have seen the rise and fall of many non-professional theatres in Chicago and other cities. In many cases, I am not convinced that this is because of a lack of dramatic talent; rather, it is the unhappy result of less than admirable business technique. Thus I decided some time ago to investigate the kinds of policies which the non-professional theatres use regarding their advertising.

I mailed out a simple survey instrument to Chicago area theatres which were non-professional and non-educational. I spoke with some theatre managers and inquired as to the kinds of questions I might ask. I pondered over these a while and developed a simple two-page questionnaire which would take no longer than a few minutes to fill out. I sent a cover letter explaining the project, including the simple questionnaire, pre-addressed and already stamped.



David Laske

Of the 50 questionnaires mailed out, 17 were returned. Generally all of the questions were answered and several forms had extended comments.

Most of the theatres that answered were recent additions to the city's cultural life. They were overwhelmingly in their first decade of existence. Most have a large Board of Directors which are made up of public spirited citizens who contribute their managerial expertise and work on fund-raising. Seating capacity is in the 225 plus range, and most of the respondents indicate that their space is rented. Most companies who answered are located on the north side of Chicago and in Evanston with the West boundary going to Lincoln Avenue.

Modern drama and musical productions are the most frequent dramatic forms that are presented. These are followed by the works of new authors. Only 3 offer children's theatre regularly and none offer interpreter's theatre. In half of the theatres, "classical pieces" are offered during the year.

Revenue and advertising information is noteworthy. There is noted wide range for both the total dollar amounts spent on advertising and its percentage of total budget. Not surprisingly, higher priced tickets are correlated to higher budget expenditures. Theatres report revenues come from ticket sales and some are fund raising and some receive grants. Most have publicity or some kind of non-paid advertising; half have prevue parties.

While most local newspapers give some publicity to theatres, those who do not receive it are low budgeted theatres for advertising. Surprisingly, many of the theatres have had exposure on the electronic media. This occurs in spite of the fact that they have not had local print media publicity. Most of the theatres have some form of a newsletter that they send out, and such newsletters may be the result of the effort to notify repeat patrons.

Most of the theatres have also received some kind of city-wide news coverage. Generally the theatres use local newspapers, radio, and fliers to get out their message.

Only one theatre indicated that it used television. This theatre also had the distinction of having the highest value for percent of budget used for advertising, and the only theatre that indicated that its advertising cost in relation to total revenue was decreasing.

Most of the responding theatres said that advertising policies were developed

for each production, and notably, this process is either a stable or varied experience for the theatres. There is nothing systematic in who does the advertising work within the theatre group, either by professional or by volunteers. Interestingly, only one theatre hired a professional advertising person.

The "What is the best advertising policy?" query evoked a varied response from the theatres. The Tribune was mentioned repeatedly as the best advertising print medium. With unlimited funds, the theatres would opt for radio and TV. There was no indication if the theatres were familiar with the production costs for commercials in addition to the time costs. Bulk and blind mailings as well as some radio/TV has not been perceived by the theatres as viable advertising expenses. The biggest costs are ads and newspaper advertisements.

Concluding remarks.-- The current literature in business practices and in theatre management have relatively ignored the more specific questions of models for advertising by the community and non-professional theatres. The survey instrument which was sent out to the theatres was the result of "common sense" and conversations with active theatre managers and board members. I performed some simple statistical analyses which did not reveal anything critical for seeing trends in the data.

It is evident that there is no systematic policy which local theatres use when considering advertising and its subsequent costs. There seems to be a belief that radio, and to a lesser degree TV, constitutes the magic way to increase audience attendance. I doubt this since the theatre-going population of the city is relatively stable. TV advertising on the theatre has traditionally been used by large commercial producers who "know" what sells- and generally it is a musical with the attendant dancers and "stars" which generate enthusiasm. It is not proper to think that a small, struggling theatre can pay for the development and presentation of a commercial in the expectation that the audience will just appear!

Hence we see that "word of mouth" seems to be the reason why most theatres have audiences. This should be explored more closely because if that is true, then theatres may be paying for advertising which is wasted. Such cost savings then could be turned back into the theatre for expansion of productions or for the improvement of the quality of productions. Moreover, the term "local advertising" should be re-evaluated since it is highly likely that patrons do not live in the neighborhoods for most of the theatres discussed in this study.

Lastly, theatres must be cognizant of the patron's desire for convenience of getting to the theatre. In studying each of the theatres it was evident that few have parking facilities for patrons who could afford subscriptions. As a suburbanite I dread the prospect each winter of struggling to find a parking place. Security factors may also enter into this equations.

This survey was an attempt to scratch the surface of a "silent" commitment of theatres in gaining audiences. It may well be that at some future time, theatre managers may group together for an attempt to discern what is really important to generating the larger and more consistent audiences.

NewsBriefs

● Interpreters Theatre will present "Night Life of the Gods" on Dec. 5,6,7, 11,12,13, and 14. Written by Thorne Smith, the story is adapted and directed by Judith West. The cast consists of: Chuck Gary as Narrator, Michael Svedman as Hunter Hawk, Kelly Fleming as Meg, John Lenart as Betts, Mary Beth Burns as Alice Pollard Lambert and Medusa, David Schulte as Alfred Lambert and Perseus, Tim Dienes as Grampa and Neptune, Chris Stelnicki as Daphne and Dianne, Jeanette Horkay as Stella, Tom, and Venus, Todd Mallasch as Junior and Mercury, Patrick Collins as Ludwig Turner, Reverend Archer, Officers Delaney and Kelly, Bill Green as Cyril Sparks, Usher, Griggs, Blotto, and Dora-1, Guy Van Swearingen as Wetmore Brightly, Judge Plenty, Officer Brownell, and Dora-2, and Stage Manager is Jackie Oetker.

● Michael Weller's "Moonchildren" is being produced by StagePlayers set for performances on Nov. 1,2,5,6,7, and 8. Those cast by Director Victoria Bussert are: Amy Ahr as Kathy, Jory Anderson as Cootie, Tim Dienes as Mr. Willis, Tony Disviscour as S.M., Chuck Gary as Effing, Jim Hayes as Ralph, Franklin Jones as Bream & Murrey, Dawn Patinkin as Ruth, Jorge Perez as Lucky, Laura Peterson as Shelley, David Shulte as Milkman, Ian Streicher as Norman, Guy Van Swearingen as Mike, Mike Svedman as Dick, Hugo Villacpando as the father of Cootie, and Rick Sandoval as Bob.

● The Gospel Choir, formerly a group with Black Heritage Club, has been given a permanent charter by the Charter Board and now becomes the 15th club under the Fine Arts Board.

● Victor Gorodinski, former UNI grad student in Music, will guest conduct the Russian Folk Orchestra playing some of his own compositions. RFO will perform on Friday, Nov. 15, at 8 pm in the Aud.

● The High School Outreach Program, that is administered by NJPA and funded by Student Senate, Planning and Development, and St. Paul Federal Savings, will host Roosevelt, Simeon, and Von Steuben choruses in Nov. and Dec. (known at this time) for noon performances in Vil. Squ.

● CCAB applications for entertainment programming positions are now being accepted. Come to E-205 or call 505.

● Evanston, Lane Tech, and Simeon Voc have won the NJPA "HighLighter" Award for school year 1984-85. Evanston won the dramatic-comedy category, with Lane taking the musical comedy award, and Simeon winning the best gospel choir guest performance at UNI. Directors of the respective programs will be notified by mail and the brass and oak award will be given to a high school official.

● NJPA will train a limited number of students in fine arts writing. When the training is completed, assignments to the PRINT and NJPA will be made as the student prefers. For information apply at the PRINT office (E-049) or call

James Rogers at extension 508.

● The Music and Speech depts. and NJPA will cooperate to produce a one-time 12-page Journal for the month of Jan. or Mar. of 1986. A 4-page insert each for Music and Theatre will be used with the 4-page edition of NJPA.

● The 4th authentic Madrigal Feast will be given Nov. 14 in Alumni Hall, 12:30 pm lunch and 7 pm dinner, each event subscribed to separately. For information call 331 or visit CC-207.

The NORTHEASTERN JOURNAL OF PERFORMING ARTS is published by the Northeastern Journal of Performing Arts media club at the Northeastern Illinois University. The opinions expressed in the NORTHEASTERN JOURNAL OF PERFORMING ARTS do not necessarily reflect those of the University.

James Rogers.....Editor
David Unumb.....Advisor

NJPA is a member of the Media Board, and the club resides in room E-205; phone 583-4050, X505.

Fleming, Oetker, Sandoval

win top awards

The combined membership of StagePlayers and Interpreters Theatre awarded Angela Oetker the Michelle Berentz Award for outstanding contributions to theatre at UNI for the previous year (1984-1985).

Kelly Fleming was chosen as "Leading Actress" and Richard Sandoval was chosen as "Leading Actor" (see front page).

Michael Svedman and Amy Ahr were chosen as the best of the "supporting" actresses and actors.

Awards were also given to Kathleen Disviscour as "Best Student Assistant Director," Angela Oetker as "Best Stage Manager," and Silvano Brugioni won "Best Technical Director" and "Best Set Design."

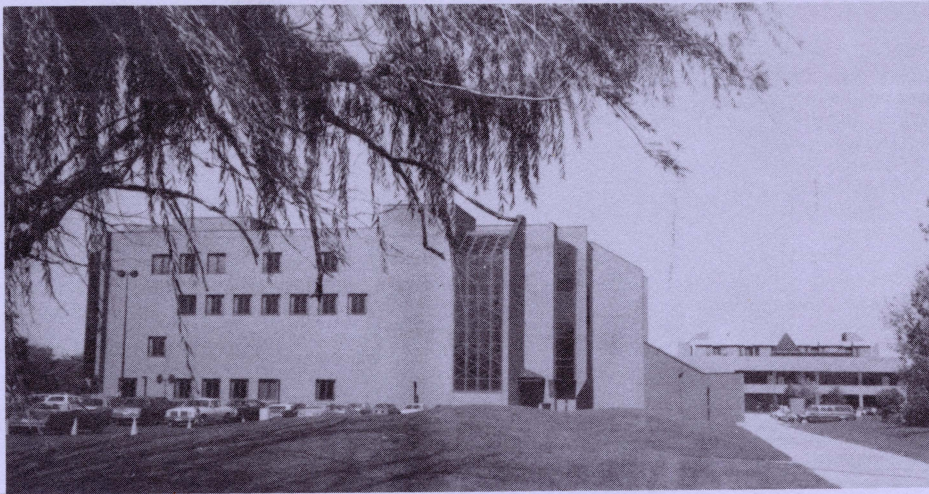
Other UNI students given awards were Anthony Disviscour for Scenery Head, Ronald Gubrud in Lighting Design and the Crew Head, Christine Stelnicki as Lighting Operator, Darice Damata-Geiger in Costume Design, Angela Oetker as Costume Crew Head, Ida Stoller as Costume Crew Member, James Bove III in Sound Operation, Jane Kenas in Musical Direction, Jacqueline Oetker in Running Crew, Anthony Bonilla in Poster Design, Ted Anton in Box Office Manager, Amy Ahr as House Manager, James Bove III in Associate Set Design, and Anthony Griffin as Usher. These annual theatre awards are held in the Stage Center little theatre in the "F Wing."



Angela Oetker



Kelly Fleming



Fine Arts Calendar

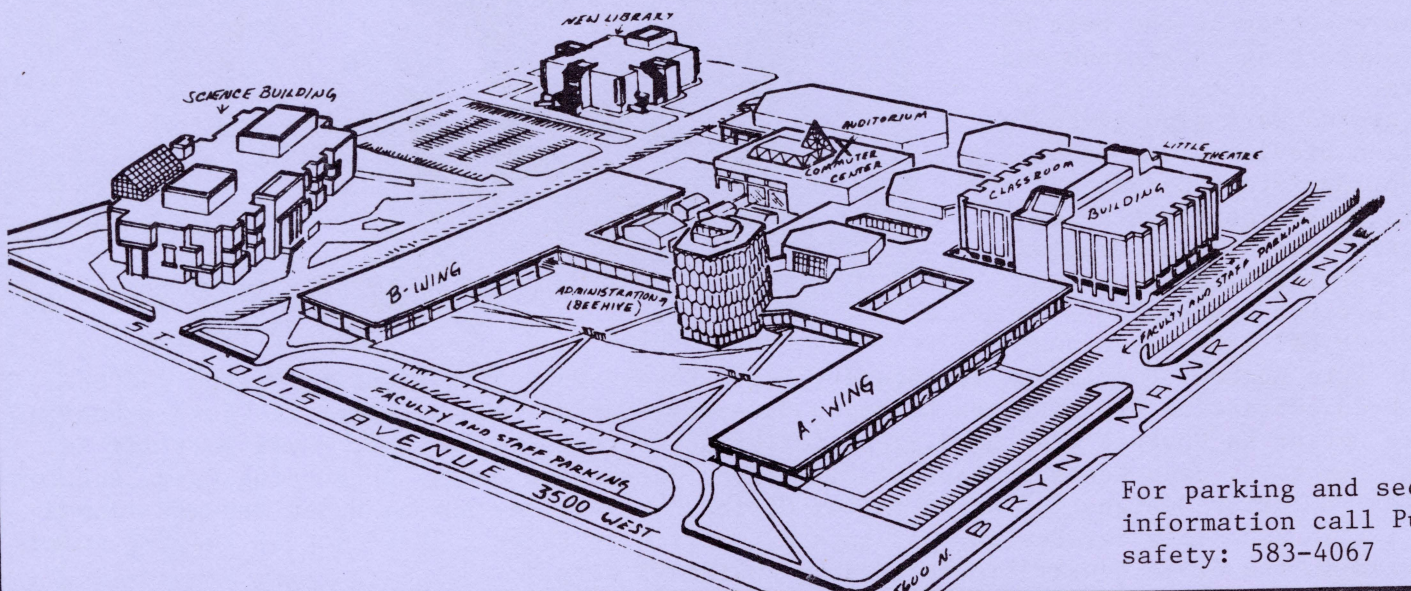
November

- 1 Film (UPRS), 12 noon, Golden Eagle Room
Joe Hall Dance (Dance Ens.-CCAB), 8 pm, Aud.
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Thea
- 2 "Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Thea
- 4 Film (TBA) (CCAB), 12 noon, CC-217
- 5 Art-Architecture (SMASH), 11 am, 2 pm, V1 Sq
Film (South Africa)(PolyScy), 11 am, CC-217
"Cinderella" rehearsals (OPC), 6 pm, Aud.
Klezmer Band (CCAB), 12 noon Village Square
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Thea
- 6 Film (TBA)(CCAB), 12 noon, CC-217
Opera Bake Sale (OPC), 9 am, Village Square
Band Concert (Concert Band), 8 pm, Auditoriu
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Thea
- 7 "Cinderella" rehearsals (OPC), 6 pm, Auditor
Int'l-Intercul(ForLang), 10 am-4 pm, Al Hall
Film (SMASH), 7 PM, CC-218
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Thea
- 8 Film (TBA)(CCAB), 12 noon, CC-217
David Tanenbaum, Guitar, 8 pm, Auditorium
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Audi
"Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Audi
- 9 "Moonchildren" (StagePlayers), 7:30 pm, Audi
- 12 "Cinderella" rehearsals (OPC), 6 pm, Auditor
Film (Aperture), 12:30 pm, Unicorn
- 14 Mary Ward-Choreographer (Dance), 12:20, A115
Film (Aperture), 12:30 pm, Unicorn
Madrigal Feast (CC), 12:30 & 7 pm, AlH, X331
- 15 Russian Folk Orchestra (CCAB), 8 pm, Aud-505
- 18 Dance Rehearsal (Dans Ens), 12 noon, Auditor
- 19 Film (Aperture), 12:30 pm, Unicorn
Bake Sale (NJPA), 10 am, Village Square

- 20 "Cinderella" Rehearsals (OPC), 12 noon, Audi
Film (Aperture), 7 pm, Unicorn
- 21 "Cinderella" Rehearsals (OPC), 12 noon, Aud
"Cinderella" Performance (OPC), 7:30 pm, Aud
Film (Aperture), 12:30 pm, Unicorn
- 22 "Cinderella" Performance (OPC), 7:30 pm, Aud
"Up the Down Staircase" (Good Counsel), 7:30
- 23 "Cinderella" Performance (OPC), 7:30 pm, Aud
"Up the Down Staircase" (Good Counsel), 7:30
- 25 Concert (Jazz Ensemble), 7:30 pm, Auditorium
- 26 Film (Aperture), 12:30 pm, Unicorn
Film "Breakfast Club" (CCAB), 7 pm, Unicorn
Bake Sale (Keyboard Club), 10 pm, Village Sq
Dance Concert (Dance Ens), 12:30 pm, Auditor
Film (SMASH), 7 pm, CC-217
- 27 Film (Aperture), 7 pm, Unicorn
Dance Concert (Dance Ens), 12 noon, Auditori

December

- 2 Band Concert (Alumni), 8 pm, Auditorium
- 3 Concert (Wind Ensemble), 8 pm, Auditorium
- 4 Xmas Chorale (Roosevelt-NJPA), 12 noon, V1Sq
Chorale Rehearsal (Music), 12 noon, Auditori
Opera Bake Sale (OPC), 9 am, Village Square
- 5 Xmas Chorale (Simeon-NJPA), 12 noon, Vil Squ
Weinerettes (CCAB), 7 pm, Auditorium
Film (SMASH), 7 pm, CC-219
- 6 Chorale Concert (Music), 8 pm, Auditorium
- 10 "St. Elmo's Fire" (CCAB), 7 pm, Auditorium
- 12 Rock Video (CCAB), 12:30, Village Square
Film (SMASH), 7 pm, CC-217



For parking and security information call Public safety: 583-4067