

New University Theater Readies for 'Winterset'

Cast Prepares for Opening

The full cast for "Winterset," the University Theater's first production in its new theater, was announced yesterday by Director Horace W. Robinson. It will be the first show of the 1949-50 season.

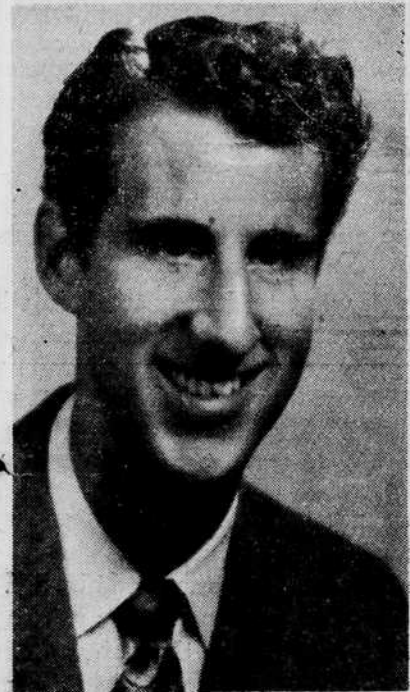
Gordon Ericksen, Mio in "Winterset," played Tom in the summer



Gordon Ericksen

production of "The Glass Menagerie." He was one of the Polo brothers in the spring term production of "Marco Millions." Ericksen also designed the set for "The Glass Menagerie."

Cliff James, who plays Judge Guant, is a veteran University Theater player. A graduate student in speech, he has twice been winner of the University Theater award, for best performance in a leading role and as a supporting actor.



Paul Wexler



Terrance Roseen

New to the stage of the University Theater this year is Barbara Pasquan, who has "Winterset's" female role, Miriamne. A sophomore, Miss Pasquan performed as a dancer in the McArthur court production of "Marco's Millions" last year.

Terrance Roseen, who plays Trock, is new to the University this year. He has attended Drake university and played two years with the Seattle Repertory Theater. He is a senior.

Fred Schneider, who played the lead in last year's "The Show-off," is Shadow. Paul Wexler, who plays Esdras, last year played in "Marco's Millions." He has also appeared in "The Adding Machine" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream." He spent the past summer playing roles in the Ashland Shakespeare Festival Theater in southern Oregon.



Clifton James

Other members of the cast include Martin Weitzner, Richard Bentz, Richard Walker, Rex Balentine, Dave Ward, Adrian Shirley, Priscilla Cuthbert, Dorothy Clark, and Robert Chapman.

'Winterset' Gets First Drama Critics' Award

It was back in 1934 that Maxwell Anderson's "Winterset" was one of the big hits of the Broadway season. That was also the year that "Winterset" didn't win the Pulitzer Prize, highest American award for writing.

When Anderson's poetic tragedy of contemporary life first arrived on the New York scene, the big town critics called it, in effect, about the best work the American theater had as yet produced. Furthermore, with Burgess Meredith and the Mexican actress Margo as the ill-fated lovers, the play enjoyed a good run.

In the spring, as the time came to award the annual Pulitzer prize, "Winterset" was about the only play that was seriously mentioned for the honor. Yet when the announcement came, Anderson's name did not lead the rest—"Winterset" had been slighted.

When next the Drama Critics' Circle, honorary for N.Y. drama critics, met, they officially voted "Winterset" the first New York Drama Critics' Award play. And, as awards are such a good idea, they still give them.

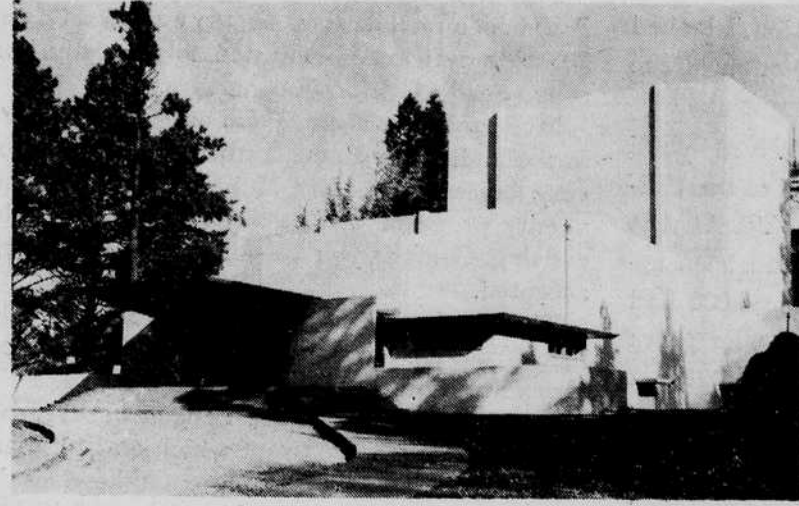
Editor's Note

Stories on this page were written by Marge Scandling and George Dorris.

Top Academic Playhouse, Says Director

The new University Theater is the best academic theater in the United States, according to Horace W. Robinson, professor of Speech and director of the theater. Robinson has seen many college and university theaters on an extensive tour of the country.

"There may be some finer theaters in general, but they are all-



purpose ones which are used for concerts and other shows," Robinson added. "Ours will be used strictly for plays and other theater productions."

The new theater is thoroughly modern in appearance, with such colors as goldenrod yellow and madron brown used with light birch hardwood. The interior of the lobby features a glassed-in box office with yellow and brown walls, and a soft, grey carpet.

The theater interior ranges from a dusty rose to a maroon. The seats are blue and the main stage curtain, not yet in place, is expected to



Barbara Pasquan

be a deep blue. The 400 seats of the theater are described as "extra wide," with curved contour backs. Rows are widely spaced to prevent inconvenience with the arrival of late-comers.

The plane of the theater is of maximum steepness for better visibility from any row. The front of the theater features an orchestra pit which can be adjusted to different heights. An audience-enclosing forestage brings the stage right next to the audience. These side wings can be used as separate units and have separate wings and entrances.

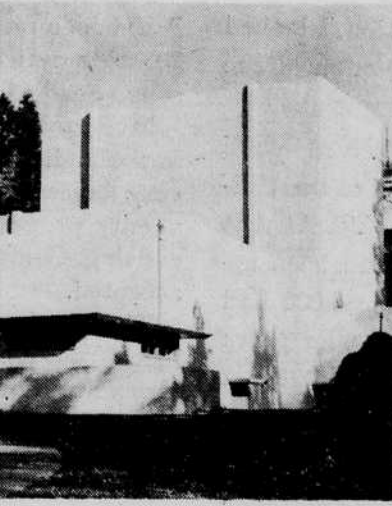
The stage floor is "trapped" for an area of 20 by 26 feet.

"This means that it is removable and can be used to create a dungeon or underground effect," commented Technical Director William E. Schlosser. "In the first production, 'Winterset,' we will use it to represent a lower-floor apartment."

Directly behind the stage is the scene shop, a large, well-lighted room to be used in the construction of settings, flats, and backdrops. Since it is on the same level as the stage, handling is facilitated great-

ly. Previously sets were constructed in a separate building and had to be transported to the Johnson Hall stage.

A large removable door separates stage and scene shop. In cases where a deep stage is needed, the door can be removed to provide 30 more feet of stage space.



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ity to match the large stage. The smaller seating capacity adds informality and greater audience contact, he felt.

The grid system above the stage will control "flying" sets which can be suspended. Ten counterweighting balances are necessary. The stage front itself will have an adjustable opening. The regular size 32 by 20 feet, can be condensed to smaller sizes, according to the effect desired.

Schlosser said that the light bridge above the stage is a feature found in few academic theaters. A semi-electronic switchboard is used for the general lighting, and is controlled from the rear of the theater. It can also be controlled from un-



LeJeune Griffith
Business Manager

derneath the stage. The theater's technical director said that it was by far the most modern system in any theater on the West Coast.

A cyclorama-type curtain will enclose three sides of the stage later on. Various lighting effects can be used with it.

Schlosser summarized the new theater's technicalities by calling it, "A field day for the technician."

Two more theaters are located in Villard, which is connected with the new theater. An arena theater, not as yet completed, will have the play in the direct center, with the audience surrounding it. No footlights, curtains, or other such theatrical trademarks will be used in this modern method of presentation.

The experimental theater, located just in back of the main scene shop, will seat about 80. It is to be used primarily in class work for drama students. Plays will be presented for class examination.



William Schlosser