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*Local, Cent. Ill., Chicago***Sept. 1, 1998****Contact:** Sherry Wallace, 309/556-3181 or
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IWU Kicks Off 1998-99 Theatre Season

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--The McPherson Theatre stage will host five productions for the 1998-99 season - ranging from a musical to a comedy and a dance to a drama.

The music of Leonard Bernstein and the classic writing of William Shakespeare will be showcased this season by Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Theatre Arts.

Candide

The curtain goes up on the 1998-99 season next month with *Candide*, based on Voltaire's satiric novel and written by Leonard Bernstein. This hilarious operetta follows the travails of our hero Candide and his true love Cunegunde as they survive various and sundry adventures, shipwrecks and general misfortunes.

The decision to use the 1982 New York City Opera version of the *Candide* score allows Illinois Wesleyan to incorporate their orchestra and chamber singers in the production. This unprecedented combination of talents of both the school of music and the school of theatre arts is guaranteed to result in a spectacular evening at the theatre.

Performances of *Candide* are on Oct. 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, and 13 at 8 p.m.

...Strindberg...

...Strindberg... is based on the play *Ghost Sonata* by August Strindberg, a turn of the century impressionist playwright. It's an eerie tale which hovers between fantasy and reality as we watch a young man search for the girl of his dreams. This play, an important forerunner to German expressionism, was updated and molded to the present day by IWU professor John Ficca.

Performances of *...Strindberg...* are on Nov. 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 at 8 p.m. and Nov. 22 at 2 p.m.

1999 Dance Concert

The 1999 Faculty Choreographed Dance Concert is a celebration of the many ways that the situations in our lives and the stories we know can be communicated through dance. Always interesting, never predictable, and often exquisite, this extraordinary dance concert continues to grow in popularity and composition each year.

Performances of the 1999 Dance Concert are on Jan. 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 at 8 p.m. and Jan. 31 at 2 p.m.

After Easter

This contemporary play is written from a woman's perspective and deals with the daily lives of several modern Irish women as they struggle with understanding their world and their places in it, both personally and politically. The author, Anne Devlin, is one of today's most promising feminist playwrights.

Performances of *After Easter* are on Feb. 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 2 p.m.

The Merchant of Venice

This classic Shakespearean comedy deals with two stories. One concerns Shylock, a rich Jewish money lender, who agrees to lend Antonio, the merchant of Venice, a sum of money which must be repaid by a certain date. If that money is not repaid at the agreed upon time, Antonio must forfeit a pound of flesh. The second story deals with Portia, a young woman from Belmont, who can only marry the suitor who is able to make the right choice of three caskets. Shakespeare brings together these two seemingly unrelated stories in a riveting and thought-provoking conclusion.

This production will be directed by Tim Hardy, a classically trained Shakespearean actor and director who comes to us directly from Great Britain. He was a member of the ACTER Company who performed *Romeo and Juliet* here in 1997.

Performances of *The Merchant of Venice* are on April 13, 14, 15, and 16 at 8 p.m. and April 17 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Ticket Information

For individual performances, tickets are \$5 for the general public, \$4 for senior citizens, and \$1 for students with valid identification. Season ticket packages for the general public are \$15 for productions on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday and \$20 for productions on Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

Tickets will be available beginning Sept. 5 during regular McPherson Box Office hours. The McPherson Theatre Box Office is open 12:30-5 p.m. weekdays, except Tuesday when the Box Office is open 12:30-4 p.m.

Tickets may be purchased with checks or cash. Credit cards are not accepted.

Tickets may be held up to three days without payment. If a show is run within that three day period, they may be picked up and paid for before the show.

Tickets may be purchased through the mail. McPherson Theatre is located at 304 E. Graham St., Bloomington.

The McPherson Theatre Box Office can be reached at 309/556-3232.