



DEADLY ERNEST - by Donald Payton

Nov 2008 Review

“The best one you have ever done”, “It’s only half time and I’ve already got my money’s worth”, and “That was the best, I can hardly wait to see what you will do next year” are a few of the many favorable comments received by the Langham Theatrical Company regarding their November 7-9 and 14-16 performance of ‘Deadly Ernest’.

2nd year Uof S student, Daniel McFarlane, stunned the audience with his portrayal of Henry Gilcrest. They laughed as they watched the changing expressions of fear on McFarlane’s face, and the constant twitching and writhing of his hands and legs as he did his best to out run all of the people named Ernest who were after him. Henry, after having been turfed out of his room by his usually loving and mild mannered aunt Ethel (played by Carol Affleck), dumped by his kind and gentle girlfriend Gladys (played by Elaine Nemanishen) and fired from his job was running for his life.

Darrell Novakovski, with his heavy Brooklyn accent, had the audience roaring with laughter as he brought the character of the park hobo, Mr. Bumpus, to life. They loved him right from his entrance on stage, which found him searching the garbage for bits and bites of food. Evan Pady playing the part of Sleepy, a bum on the street, complemented Novakovski’s role very well much to the enjoyment of the audience.

The two little girls, playmates of Henry’s, charmed their way into the hearts of all of the guests. Pumpkin, played by eleven-year-old Dale Johnson, did an astounding job of delivering all of her witty, smart aleck comments right on cue all the while looking as relaxed as if she were sitting in the living room of her own home. Sweet little Courtney Pady, playing the role of Jill, Pumpkin’s friend, equally complimented Johnson’s role.

Alicia Levesque with her delightful little giggle playing the part of Margie, and Steven Balzer as Ernie, Margie’s boy friend from the wild state of Texas, were a fun couple to watch. The pair brought their share of laughter to the mix.

Boarding room residents, Clarissa, played by first time actress Barb Wall, and Ernestine, played by Sonia Zacharias, also presented the audience with reason to burst out in laughter. The two ladies did a fabulous job of portraying a couple of old maids whose love of murder mysteries was equal only to that of their determination to find a man.

Filling in the gaps and making the play flow smoothly were actors Elaine Friesen, playing the role of critical Aunt Stella, Emery Ens as C.E. Grim, Ethel’s gentleman friend, and Beverly Dahl as the soft spoken Dr. Earnest.

Director, Sela Balzer, on behalf of the cast and crew wish to thank everyone for the standing ovation they received on all of the 6 performances. Your spontaneous laughter and applause is all the reward we need for us to do it again next year.

Jerry Crawford’s Report

- from Wadena News Report

We went to Langham’s Dinner Theater Friday evening and it was everything we expected. Marvelous food, catered by Hella McDonald and her five daughters, and a hilarious play titled “Deadly Ernest”.

Langham has a marvelous hall. It looks fairly new and is very spacious. There was room for twenty-seven big, round tables, each seating eight to ten people without crowding and still leaving room to move between tables. As far as I could see, it was full. The stage is across the full length of the end of the hall – it could accommodate South Pacific without trouble.

Hella McDonald (from Archerwill) told us about the Langham Dinner Theater. We had only met her once, years ago, but had enjoyed her superb food several times, at Greenwater and at Archerwill. Her twin sister, Sela Balzer, from Langham, directed the play. What a great evening!