

Jerry Crawford: multi talented theatre professional

by mish tell

managing editor

It's such a rarity that an institution could possess a man whose unique talents balance with charm, innate dedication to his art and sincerity to all he meets.

UNLV is lucky to have such an individual and he is Jerry L. Crawford.

Crawford, playwright, actor, director, critic, author has graced UNLV with 25 years. Now celebrating his silver anniversary, Crawford opened this year's Judy Bayley Theatre season with the creation and production of his play, *Facelifting at St. Abigails*. A play very dear to his heart. A play that developed in the course of 17 years.

"I call it my bittersweet play," Crawford said.

Author of 13 plays, of which 11 were produced and 2 have been published, Crawford's play theme inspirations are lined with optimism.

"I honestly think a writer's favorite work is in the typewriter—the one

you're working on—the one that's not done," Crawford said. "I never have a play produced without another one underway."

But how does one come up with the theme, plots, and character analyses to produce a play?

Giving the analogy of play development like the conception to delivery of childbirth, Crawford believes his play ideas are inspired by visions.

"My ideas usually take root in some image, visual, aural, something someone says, I read, or see. The image takes root in a thought process and that's harder to describe. For me it takes a long time to grow."

"*The Last President* [The Black Box Theatre opening play written by Crawford about Lydon B. Johnson] was important to our society," Crawford said when I asked him to describe one of his favorite plays.

"It had a most complex play structure."

Crawford's theater role goes far beyond the playwright standpoint. He is

also the author of the text book *Acting in Person and in Style* used in over 300 American and Canadian colleges and universities.

Over his past years at UNLV holding numerous committee titles as well as being the first Dean of Faculty (now Vice President

Crawford has had a hand in the construction and creation of all UNLV's theatre houses.

But more importantly than the creation of theatre developments and the publishing of written material, Crawford finds his heart with the teaching and passing of his theatre intelligence to students.

"My educational influence on students far exceeds my impact as an author," Crawford said when revealing his greatest accomplishment. "It's all secondary to my classroom experiences."

"It's an unusual and outstanding experience in a lifetime [For UNLV students] to work under a professor like Jerry Crawford — to see his work

production," Dr. Beverley Byers-Pevitts, Theatre Department Chairperson said.

A highly successful theater professor, nationally recognized author and playwright, critic, director, father and husband to an "arts" orientated family, Jerry Crawford is a role model to anyone who wants to add diversity to a profession they love.

How does he see himself?

"Perpetually perturbed," Crawford said. "I'm always restless and I am told I tend to motivate crisis and drama — that's not always a good thing.

"At heart I think of myself as a farmboy who would have preferred to play baseball. But then, we all have a dream that we missed."



Crawford's place in UNLV theatre is mere dedication. We're lucky to have him here—he's brought a lot of recognition just by his very presence," Linda McColum, Theatre Department Business/Publicist said.

of Academic Affairs).

Skating on the thin ice

Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull makes his guest VJ debut on MTV on Tuesday, October 20th at 7 pm. The segment, which was filmed in New York City's Central Park, finds Anderson roaming the hills with flute in hand and springing from behind the trees to serenade unsuspecting picnickers with strains of *Bouree*.

In the course of the hour, Anderson also pirates a rowboat (and waitress) from a posh lakeside restaurant, learns the fine points of cruising for girls via remote-control car, and is subjected to some fishy business from a pair of young urban anglers.

Anderson has quite a fish story himself: in addition to his rock and roll duties with Tull, he owns an

acclaimed salmon farming operation in Scotland, with clients such as Harrod's in London.

Jethro Tull, who have just released their 21st Chrysalis album, *Crest of a Knave* will be celebrating their 20th rock and roll anniversary with a tour that

brings them to the States in November and December this year.

The video for Tull's first single, *Steel Monkey* has been on MTV since October 6.

Editors note: Stay tuned for a special feature on Jethro Tull to be appearing soon!

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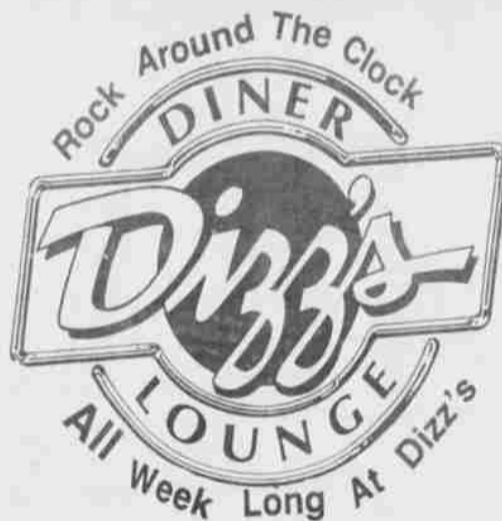
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