

Judy Bayley Theater

America's most endearing roommates will introduce Summer Rep '78 at the Judy Bayley Theatre on June 29.

Gruff, cigar-chomping Oscar Madison will be sloppier than ever and Felix Ungar as neurotically clean when Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple" opens the sixth season of professional summer repertory theatre at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Complementing the effervescent Neil Simon comedy (June 29-July 9) are Arthur Miller's powerful drama "Death of a Salesman" (July 13-23) and "The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia" (July 27-Aug. 6).

The box office will open June 19 for season and individual ticket sales. Hours are weekdays 1 to 5 p.m. Call 739-3666 or 739-3641 for more information.

"We decided to take advantage of the large pool of men actors we have in Las Vegas," Fredrick L. Olson said about the predominantly male season.

Olson, who has served as a director, designer and technical director for previous summer seasons, will manage Summer Rep '78. In addition to directing "Knights of the White Magnolia," Olson shares star billing in "The Odd Couple." He plays Felix, the fastidious newly de-wed popularized in film by Jack Lemmon and in television by Tony Randall.

Jerry L. Crawford is Oscar, the slovenly half of Simon's infamous duo, the role developed by Walter Matthau in the movie and by Jack Klugman in the television series.

Crawford, a professional playwright and theatre professor at UNLV, will also perform in "Death of a Salesman" and "Knights of the White Magnolia."

"Theatre audiences should find it very exciting to watch actors playing distinctly different roles throughout a single season," Olson said.

The Summer Rep cast list reveals a number of such multiple performances, with ten of the 17-member company acting in at least two plays. Chip Mosher and Lou Teitelbaum, with Crawford, landed roles in all three plays. The trio worked together in Bayley Theatre's November production of Pinter's "The Homecoming." Glenn Casale will open Summer Rep as a director and finish as a performer in "The Knights of the White Magnolia."

Bayley's summer season is coming much closer to realizing the true concept of repertory theatre, that is, using a core of working professionals in different roles of alternating productions, Olson said.

"Everyone in the Summer Rep is a strong seasoned actor. There's not one newcomer," he said.

"I'm somewhat prejudiced, but I think the quality of Summer Rep distinguishes it from other local producing theatres.

"We are better equipped, have better funding and have a high quality, professional staff--but we have been here longer," he added promptly, noting the growing success of all Las Vegas Theatres.

"When I came here eight years ago, Judy Bayley was the only theatre in the city. Now there are 13 groups registered with Allied Arts," he said.

"I don't think there is any question that our local audiences are growing. Theatre is in a real upswing," he said.

"There is an excitement in live theatre that audiences cannot experience through the other entertainment media," Olson explained.

"You become much more involved with a stage performance. There is an empathy between the audience and the cast that can at moments become electric, almost tangible," he said.

These ideas will be tested when Summer Rep presents "Death of a Salesman," one of theatre's most powerful dramas. Critics have described the play as the only true tragedy written by an American playwright. It won Arthur Miller a Pulitzer Prize.

Paul C. Harris, theatre professor at UNLV, captured the leading role as aging salesman Willy Loman. Harris said playing this most challenging and rewarding role has been a life-long dream.

The UNLV professor will be coached by Ed EmmanuEl, guest director from California State University at Fresno. Award winner EmmanuEl has earned national and international recognition as both a director and dramatist. His plays have been produced in 35 states as well as abroad, and he has directed throughout Europe. His directorial assignments after Summer Rep are at New York City's Lincoln Center and the Annual Edinburgh Festival.

"The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia," a contemporary tragic-comedy by Preston Jones, will crown Summer Rep's All American season. The parody recounts the final meeting of a Ku Klux Klan-like organization which has assembled to initiate its first new member in five years.

Male members of the Summer Rep company, identified by their most recent Bayley productions, include Art Engler ("A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"), John McHugh ("A Christmas Carol"), Brian Strom ("Where Has Tommy Flowers Gone?"), Patrick O'Neill ("I Never Sang For My Father"), Steve Bernier ("The Gingerbread Lady") and Robert L. Dixon ("El Hajj Malik"). Rick Romito, a graduate student at Yale, returns to Las Vegas to serve as technical director.

Summer Rep actresses are Californian Betty Vaughn ("Peter Pan"), Erica Gaddy ("The Heiress"), Lesley Ann Rush ("The Bacchae"), Denise Miller ("The Bacchae") and Judy Goldstein ("The Importance of Being Earnest").

Thursday, Friday and Saturday performances will begin at 8 p.m. Sunday matinees are at 2 p.m.

Season tickets for the three plays are \$12 through the run of "The Odd Couple." Individual tickets are \$4 general admission. Discounts are given to senior citizens, youths under 19, military personnel and to UNLV personnel and students.

Reel Thing

The Reel Thing Children's Film Series presents the sci-fic thriller "Day of the Triffids" Saturday, June 17th at 11 a.m. at the Decatur Library, 720 S. Decatur and at 3 p.m. at the West Las Vegas Library, 1402 N. "D" Street.

The hideous crawling triffids invade earth and there is no escape. . . The 94 minute horror film, based on a novel by John Wyndham, is presented free to strong-hearted young people Saturday, June 17th at participating Clark County Libraries.

Film Festival

A four-part film festival, Directed by John Ford, is scheduled June 18-21 in the Clark County Library Auditorium, 1401 E. Flamingo Road. Ford is, without exception, a master of the American film story and this series, part of the regularly scheduled Cinema '78 season, chronicals the development of his work.

Sunday, June 18th at 2 p.m. Peter Bogdonovitch's feature documentary "Directed by John Ford" introduces the festival and focuses on Ford's collective vision as represented by 57 years of filmmaking and over 140 features. Footage from 27 of Ford's films are combined with interviews with the director and three of his actors, Henry Fonda, James Stewart and John Wayne. In addition to providing insights into Ford's view of the American destiny, the documentary reveals the history of film's growth to a classic art form and explores the director's working relationship with his performers, his visual style and his themes. "Directed by John Ford" presents a compelling film portrait of the director set against the backdrop of his own work.

Selected as representative samples from Ford's vast body of film are the "Informer" (1935), "The Three Godfathers" (1948) and "The Quiet Man" (1952), scheduled for showing free to the public at 7 p.m. June 19, 20 and 21 in the Library Auditorium.

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