Eppley Little Theater closed; new facility scheduled for Fall

By Jeanne Haas

Creighton's Eppley Little Theater will soon be taking its final curtain call. The theater is being converted into administrative offices for Creighton's new night school, University College.

Reactions to this decision have been mixed. Although a better facility would "be a blessing," there is concern that a new usable facility will not be found, according to theater director, Dr. Suzanne Dieckman.

The Rev. Michael G. Morrison, S.J., president, said the Finance committee is looking at three or four possibilities, but so far nothing has been decided. However, he said that there will be a theater next fall.

Until a decision is reached and work has begun on the new location, plans for next year's production are at a standstill. Vito La Bella, Arts junior, is a theater major concerned about the theater situation. La Bella said even though the administration has promised a theater for next fall, he is afraid plans will not be followed through.

Arts junior Tammy Medinger, also a theater major, expressed the same fear. "We aren't guaranteed a new location yet. I'd hate to spend my senior year as a theater major without a theater," she said.

Dieckman said although the Little Theater was not an ideal facility, it would be a great harm if there was no theater at all. "It is important to have a theater not only for the theater majors but also for the student audiences as part of their educational experience," she said. "We don't expect anything lavish, we just want to have a good workable space."

"The unattractive facility we have now seems to reflect to students the idea that there isn't much support for the theater department and that it is not a high priority," she said.

A proposal to convert the triangle building located at 30th and Burt Streets, north of the dental school, was made by the theater department. "The triangle building has enough space for costumes, seating, a scene shop and make-up rooms," La Bella said.

This would save Creighton money that is now being spent to rent buildings for some of these things, he said. "It would also save the $4,500 that Creighton pays to rent Joslyn for 'A Company of Dancers.' This could be performed at Creighton if we had a larger stage."

Dieckman said she is willing to use this location. "This is an interesting space that could work but it would need renovation," she said. Another possibility is to build a new section onto the old gym. "This would give the theater a separate identity," she said.

A petition proposing the use of the triangle building has been circulated and signed by students, faculty members and staff, La Bella said. "The support's there. Now we need an expedient decision," he said.

Dieckman said she is also pleased with the amount of concern shown on campus on this issue. "It's reassuring to know people are supportive," she said.

Although there are not many theater majors, approximately 2,000 people attend the plays, La Bella said.

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