'Playing the Food' to offer a taste of Creighton playwright's work

By Marcy Mroczek

"Playing the Food," a one-act play written by Brian Kokensparger, will be featured at the One Act Play Festival during Dec. 7-9 at the Interim Performing Arts Center.

Kokensparger, secretary of the Fine Arts Department, said the message of the play depicts the isolation and victimization of a handicapped person. "It shows how our world today offers no challenge for handicapped people to come out," he said.

"I wouldn't say the play is a tragedy because there is hope in the end. It is more of a dramatic work than anything else," Kokensparger said.

Kokensparger, an English major, began writing plays about three years ago. "I write poetry and short stories, but am drawn to dialogue so I concentrate on plays," Kokensparger said.

Kokensparger has also written another one-act play, "The Changing Table" and a full length play, "Doin' Chickens."

Kokensparger also enjoys acting. He has performed in the Creighton productions of "The Taming of the Shrew," "The Elephant Man," "Brigadoon," "Angels Fall," "Hamlet" and "The Diary of Adam and Eve." He was also assistant director in "Amadeus."

"Of all my acting experiences, my role as John Merrick in "The Elephant Man" was the most difficult, the most invigorating," Kokensparger said. "I've never had an experience like it," he said.

Kokensparger says he owes a lot to the people who have helped him over the past few years. "The professors in the English Department have given me a lot of help with my writing, and the theater staff offered me the opportunity to produce a play," Kokensparger said.

Kokensparger is especially grateful to Amy Harmon, the director of "Playing the Food." "The director helps to bring out the best in a play and find things that need to be worked on," he said. "Behind every good playwright is a good director. Amy is just that, and I know she will go far in her career," Kokensparger said.

Kokensparger hopes to receive his degree in a few years. He does not see writing to be his sole career goal. "I want to continue writing, but will not put the pressure on myself to write

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Besides "Playing the Food," other plays featured in the "One-Act Play Festival" are Robert Patrick's "My Cup Runneth Over," Daniel Wright's "The Feast," and Eugene Ionesco's "Bald Soprano."

Saturday night's performance will also include a reader theater based on Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find."

- General Admission tickets are available at the door for a reduced price of $2.

Brian Kokensparger, author of the drama, "Playing the Food," which depicts the isolation and victimization of the handicapped. Photo by Sau Leung.