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Theater Department Milestones in the Evolution of CSB/SJU Cooperation

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Theater Department Milestones *in the Evolution of CSB/SJU Cooperation*



The earliest examples of CSB/SJU cooperation had to do with theater productions.



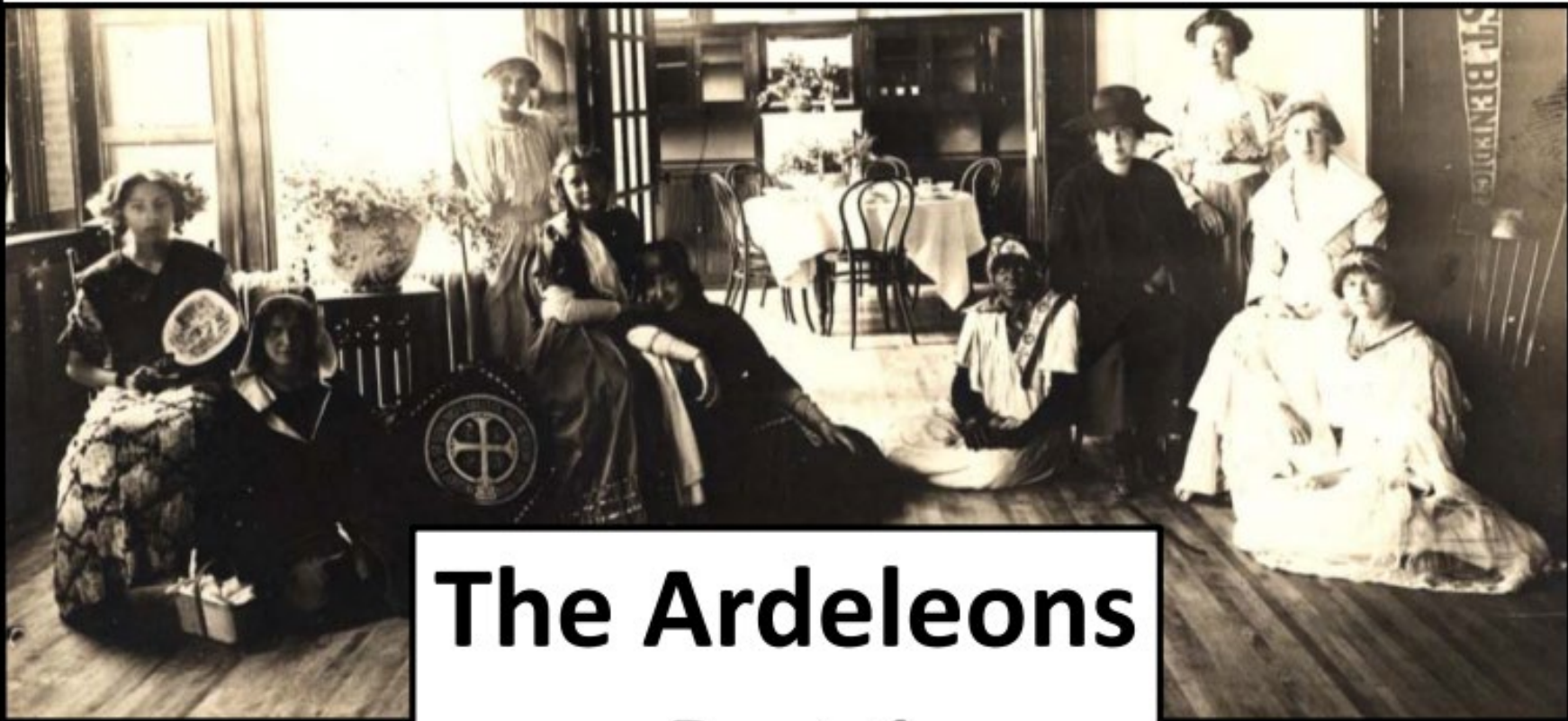
See also:

Previous “history lessons” on CSB’s Ardeleons theatrical group are available on the “history lessons” page on the Archives’ websites.

(and Part 2)



Drama on a Women’s Campus



The Ardeleons *Part 1*



This is one of the earliest images of a theatrical performance at St. John's. Note the all-male cast, and the blackface characters. (Yes, that's part of our history, too.)



1. O. Mayenberger. 2. B. Jacobs. 3. N. Krier. 4. M. Miltner. 5. Jno. Hansen. 6. W. Blum.
 7. S. Tell. 8. Paul Kuich. 9. M. Newers. 10. G. Knapp. 11. T. Niemann. 12. A. Kugler. 13. H. Wiechmann.
 14. C. Basel. 15. J. Kaiser. 16. J. Peschges. 17. Jas. Hansen. 18. H. Deutsch. 19. B. Kevenhaerster.
 20. Jno. Schneppenheim. 21. G. Hermanutz. 22. Peter Kuich. 23. E. Ortman. 24. J. Simmer. 25. J. Marn. 26. G. Gertken.

Souvenir "Garcia Moreno" - 1894
 of
 Silver Jubilee Celebration of St. Boniface Literary Society.

"Garcia Morenos Tod' ...was played by members of the St. Boniface Literary Association to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation."

1894

“The St. Boniface Literary Association was organized in 1870 by the German students for the cultivation of the German language and literature. ...In March 1870... [it opened]...a library of choice German books.” And here’s their program for a 1910 play.

Entertainment

given by the

St. Boniface Literary Society

JUNE 5, 1910

St. John's University

“Zwei Stunden in Muenchen”

Lustspiel in zwei Aufzuegen

Program

Dueppel Schanzen, March	-	-	-	-	-	Piefke
U. Orchestra						
Der hl. Bonifazius, Apostel der Deutschen	-					Jos. Hain
Birds and the Brook, Schottisch	-					Stults
U. Orchestra						
ACT I.						
Im Westen	-					Heinrich Ortmann
Grünhorns Erlebnisse auf der Weltausstellung zu Philadelphia	-					Hub. Budig
Prairie, Ouverture	-					Bouillon
U. Orchestra						
ACT II.						
“Stand Pat,” March	-					Roberts
U. Orchestra						
CAST OF CHARACTERS						
Sallustius Schwammerlmeier, Bierbrauer in Weichs						Jos. Wasche
Xaver, sein Vetter	-					Aug. Stegmann
Sallustius Lamplmann						Karl Bularzik
Korbinian Schneefanger	}	Universitäts-	studenten			Fritz Gans
Christian Fuchszagel						Hub. Budig
Kilian Prügelspitzer						Georg Botzet
Ein Dienstmann	-					Heinrich Luetmer
Ein Polizeidiener	-					Karl Kapsner

1910



The cast of
*“Zwei Studen
in Muenchen,”*
perhaps?



1910

Aside from the Exhibition Hall (1872-1894 and a history lesson for another day!), this was the first performance venue at St. John's.

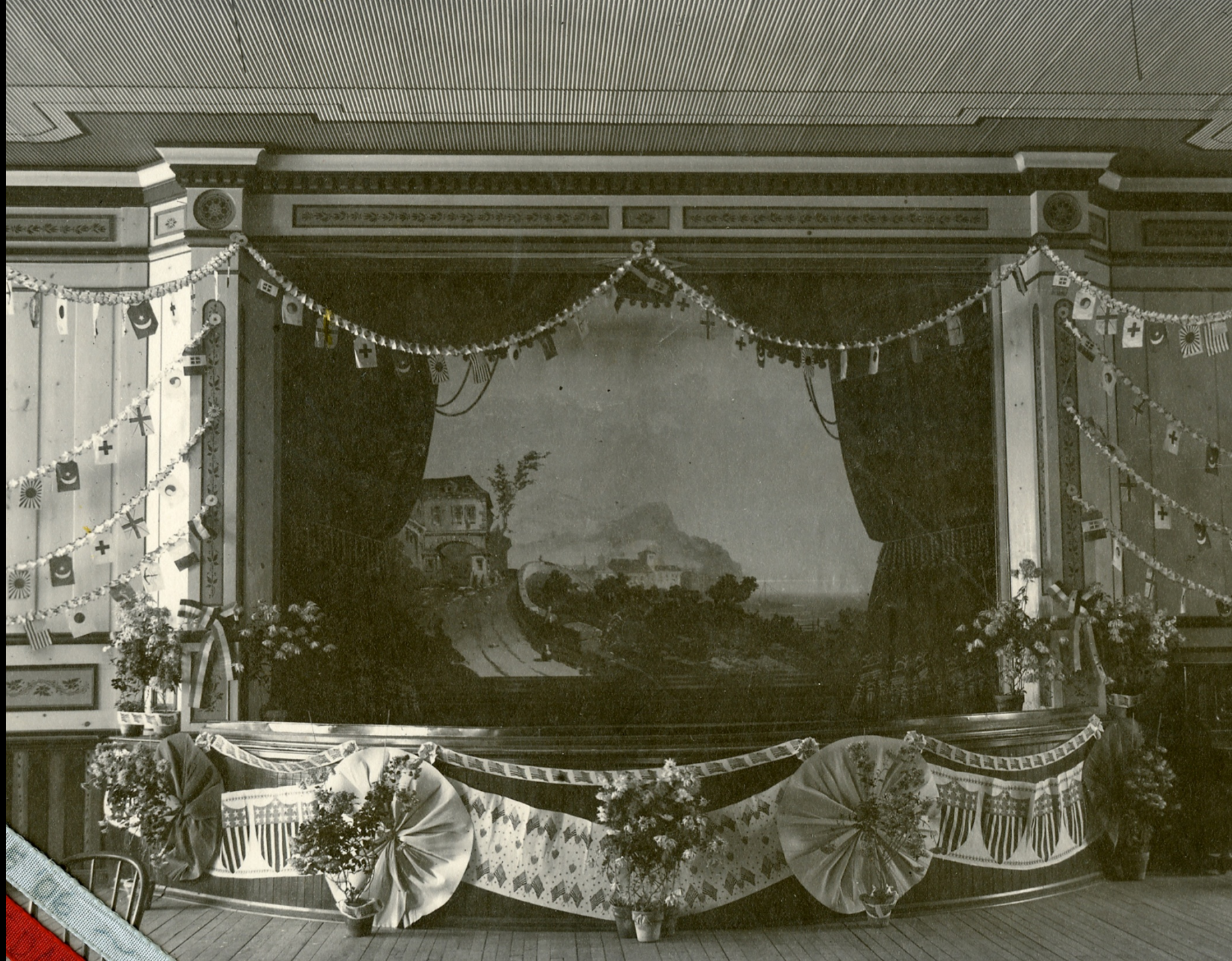
Nowadays part of it is still a large room, though not quite so large, that's on the 3rd floor of the Quad, above Q264/the Centenary Room.



1906



Here's that
early stage
again, all
decked
out...for
something.



1906



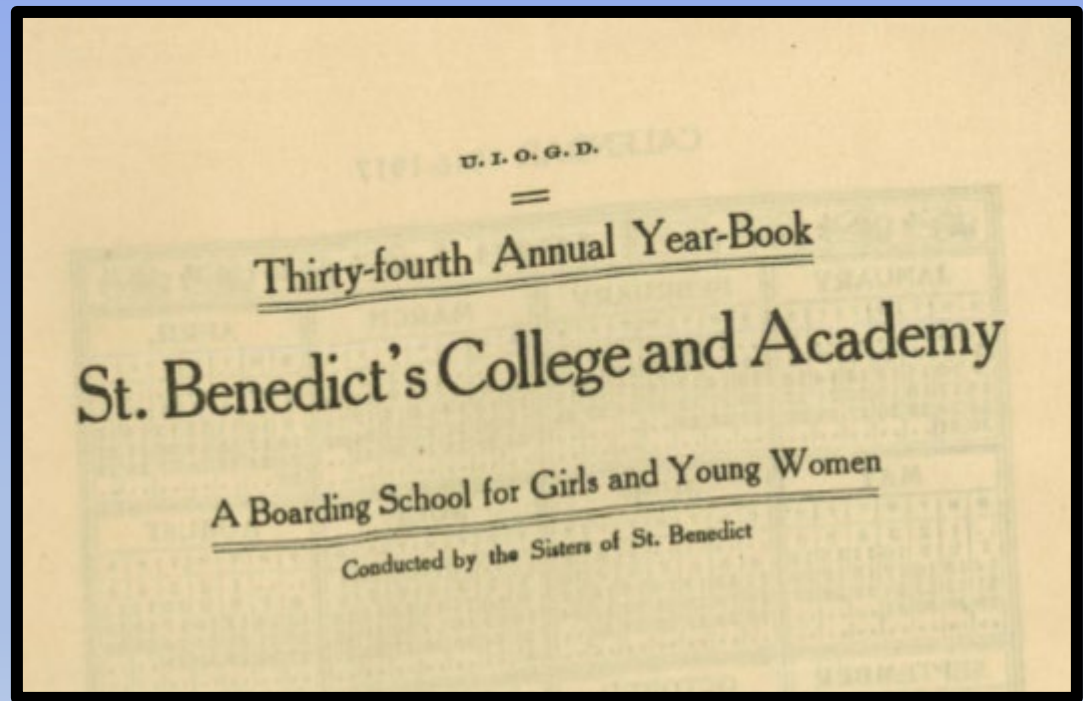
In the early days at St. Ben's, performances took place in this theater, on the second floor of Teresa Hall, which doubled as a classroom.

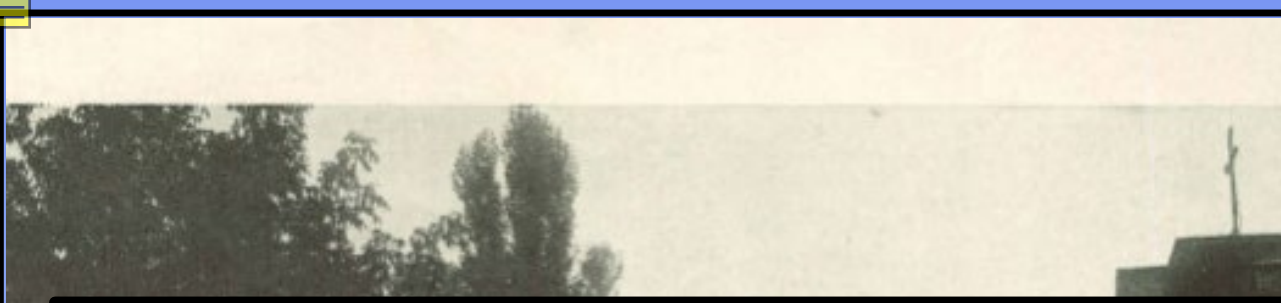




EAST CAMPUS

...and, a few years later, the College was established in 1913.





DEPARTMENT OF EXPRESSION

The aim of this department is to develop beauty, power, and flexibility of the speaking voice. Pupils will be trained in the reading of short stories, monologues, and the literary forms peculiar to today, as well as the best of classic literature, prose and poetry.

The regular work of this department is divided into two parts: a preparatory and an advanced course. The preparatory course covers a period of two years and is so arranged that it may be taken together with the regular high school course. The advanced course covers a period of two years, and is open to those who have finished High School English in addition to the elementary course of this department.

EAST CAMPUS

DEPARTMENT OF VOICE CULTURE

The course of instruction in singing is thorough and systematic. The method used is based upon the Italian School of Voice and German Methods, with their deep, elastic breath control, voice-placing, accent, phrasing and distinct enunciation.

The College and Academy's "Department of Expression" represented the closest thing to a Speech or Theater department at that time.

U. I. O. G. D.

Thirty-fourth Annual Year-Book

St. Benedict's College and Academy

A Boarding School for Girls and Young Women
Conducted by the Sisters of St. Benedict

1916-1917

ST. BENEDICT'S
COLLEGE & ACADEMY



St. Joseph, Minn.

1919-20.

1920-21

1920 - 1921 no catalog printed.

DEPARTMENT OF EXPRESSION

COURSE I.

Physiology and Hygiene of the Voice. Preparatory Exercises for Muscular Development. Placement of the Voice. Correct Method of Breathing. Practice in Word Grouping, Phrase Accent, Inflection, and Modulation. Correction of Defects and Mannerisms. Directness. Conversation. Oral English. Life Study and Personation. Cultivation of the Imagination. Rendition of Narratives and other Short Readings. Study of Emotion in Its Effect Upon Voice and Gesture. Exercise in the use of Bodily Language.

COURSE II.

Freedom for the Organs of Speech. Breath Control. Tone Placing. Responsiveness of Voice to Emotion. Flexibility. Development of Slides. Curing of Defects of Voice such as Throaty, Flat, and Nasal Tones. Ear Training. Story Telling. Interpretation of Selections from the Best Literature. Laws of Platform Reading. Characterization. Objective Drama. Series of Practical

THE SHAKESPEARE DRAMATIC CLUB

adds further to the interest of the school by giving literary plays and entertainments at various times during the scholastic year. Any advanced student of the Expression class may become a member.

Paintings and Statuary.

COURSE IV.

Development of Musical and Expressive Speaking Tones. Power of Voice. Increasing Volume. Practice in the use of Tone Language. Perspective of Speech. Intensity of Expression. Development of Momentum. Study of Classical Drama with Reference

And a couple of years after that, the Department of Expression featured the "Shakespeare Dramatic Club," which gives "literary plays and entertainments."

1919-1920



Meanwhile, at St. John's, the theatrical and musical arts make a major leap forward with the 1928 construction of a new Auditorium...

1928



...used by
prep and
college
students
alike.
Here's a
Prep
School
cast from
90+ years
ago. No
females
needed.

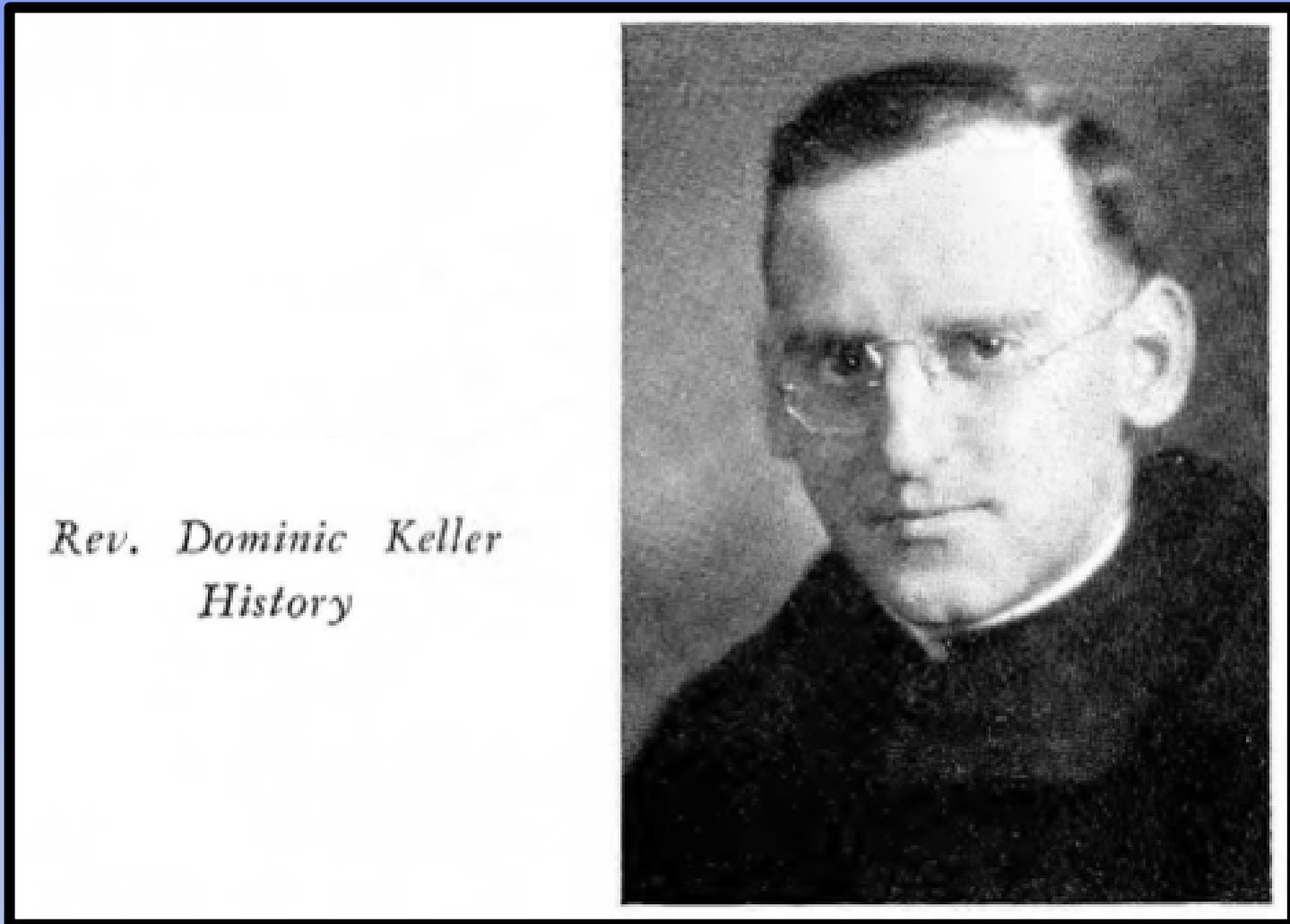


SJP

1930



Sagatagan yearbook



In 1934 someone very important to Theater and Music at St. John's shows up among the faculty: Fr. Dominic Keller, originally as a history professor.

1934

UNDER the direction of Rev. Dominic Keller, the College Prep students staged two plays, the first exemplifying the fact that the rah-rah boys are not the genuine assets of a college, and the second that it is not so hard to write a mystery story when you are locked in an abandoned inn in the middle of winter.

By the next year,
he's directing the
Prep plays.



1935



That same page in the 1935 yearbook shows that the college students were putting on a Morality play...again, no females required.

MAN GOES ON TRIAL

THIS morality play depicts the vital strife in the soul of Man, unveiled as we find him following his fall in the Garden of Paradise. On the one hand strengthened by the grace of God, while on the other weakened by the deceptive allurements of the World, the Flesh, and Satan, Man battles to retrieve his lost claims to the portals of Heaven. The powers of evil are mighty, but God's infinite love of self-sacrifice is the victor.

Cast of Characters

In order of their appearance

<i>Spirit of Chaos</i>	JUAN ORONoz	<i>Free Will</i>	ALVIN TANDBERG
<i>Satan</i>	ARTHUR PLANTENBERG	<i>Time</i>	EDMUND PIOTROWSKI
<i>Sin</i>	JOSEPH MARX	<i>Penitence</i>	JACK JOHANNES
<i>World</i>	GEORGE WELTE	<i>Death</i>	JAMES O'KEEFE
<i>Desire</i>	JAMES FREDERICK	<i>Priest</i>	JOSEPH KELSO
<i>Flesh</i>	GEORGE TOMAN	<i>Altar Boy</i>	LAWRENCE KORTE
<i>Voice of God</i>	JAMES QUIGLEY	<i>Roman Soldier</i>	VICTOR TABAKA
<i>Love</i>	ROBERT HOLLENHORST	<i>Pontius Pilate</i>	ALFRED AZZO
<i>Conscience</i>	ALLEN O'BRIEN	<i>Death Genii</i> {	RICHARD McDONOUGH
<i>Knowledge</i>	BERNARD LUCKING		GAYLORD STENGLEIN
<i>Man</i>	JAMES COYNE		

1935



**Same goes for “Captain Van Der Hum” in 1936.
This image is a cropping of another photo:**

1936



Here's the complete photo in the Archives, showing the piano and organ in the pit.



1936

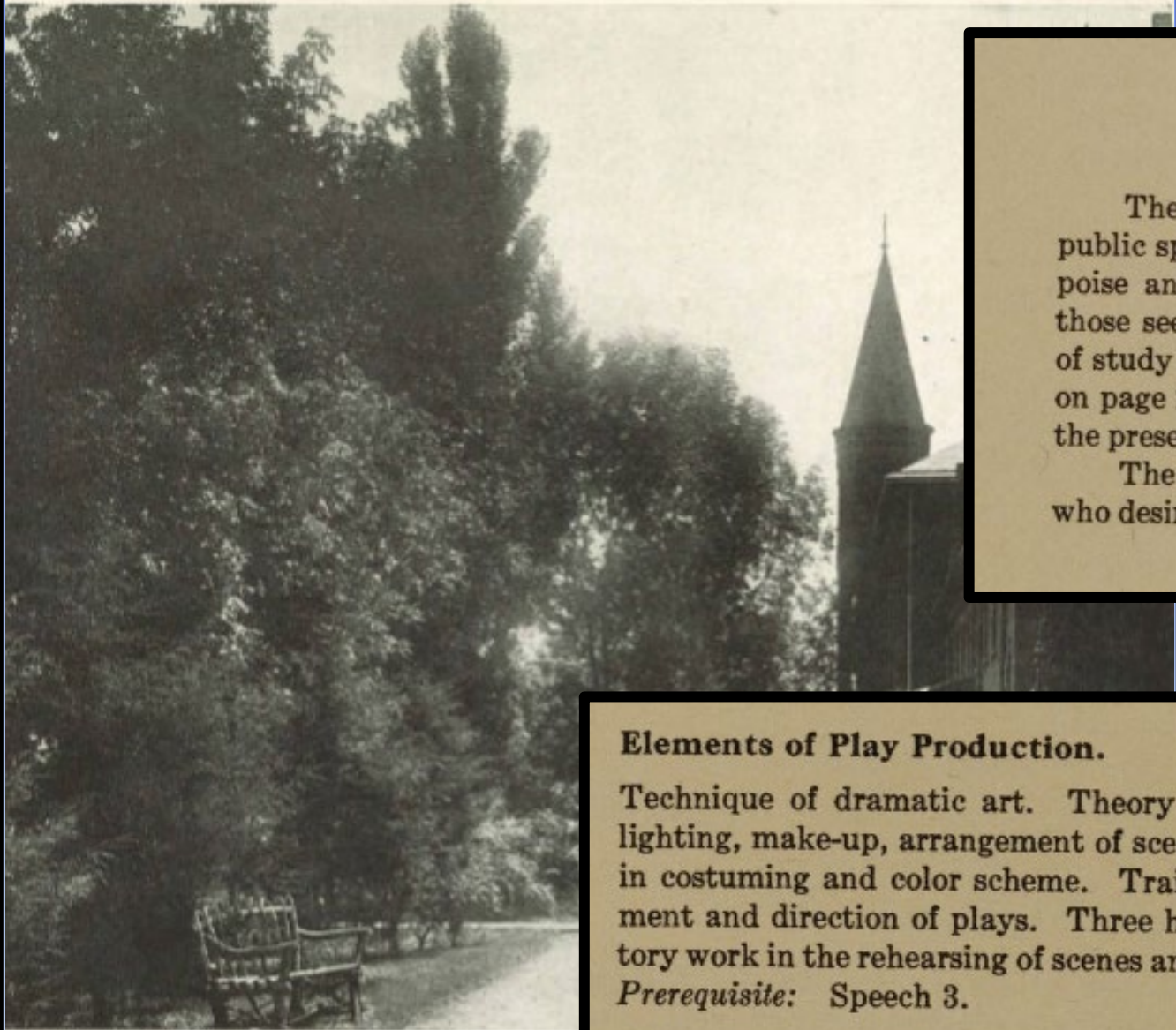


Cast and stage setting for Lenten drama "Marvelous History of St. Bernard"

“Father Dominic directing Johnny Players for the first time, [is] responsible in large part for the success...” while he’s also teaching in the History department, moderating the International Relations Club and directing the Student Choristers...

In keeping with a time-honored tradition, the Johnny Players gave a Lenten play at the end of the penitential season of '37—without the customary scenes that make the audience experience vicariously the horror of sin and death This year a simple play—depicting the life of a holy man—and his struggles to achieve sanctity—a relief from the heavy and nerve-wracking moralities Father Dominic directing Johnny Players for the first time—responsible in large part for the success Ed Fleming in the title role, as St. Bernard—won plaudits—resonant voice—fine work in character portrayal, especially in exposition

1937



EAST CAMPUS

Department of Speech

The courses in this department are planned to equip students to teach public speaking, debate, and dramatics in high schools; to develop in them poise and ease in appearing before an audience; and to give training to those seeking purely personal culture. Supplementing the regular courses of study in play production is the dramatic club, the *Ardeleons*—(see Clubs on page 20). Its purpose is to furnish practical training to its members by the presentation of standard plays to the public.

The department also offers opportunities for speech correction to those who desire such assistance.

Elements of Play Production.

Technique of dramatic art. Theory and practice in stage lighting, make-up, arrangement of scenery. Demonstrations in costuming and color scheme. Training in stage management and direction of plays. Three hours a week of laboratory work in the rehearsing of scenes and plays.

Prerequisite: Speech 3.

Quarter credits 4.

Meanwhile, back at St. Ben's, the Department of Expression was replaced by the Department of Speech in the late 1930s. It offers a course in Play Production.

1938-1939

The Johnny Players



Last fall Rev. Dominic Keller, O. S. B., faculty moderator, called a meeting of the outstanding actors on the campus and together they thrashed out the organization problem. A small group was selected as a nucleus for the new club. Each of these men was given definite jobs in connection with lighting, programs, scenery, etc., over and above a chance to act in the year's productions. The arrangements proved to be eminently successful.

**Fr. Dominic reorganizes
the Players, on stage
and behind the scenes.**

Standing—E. Bolger, E. Anthony, R. Halvorson, J. Barry. Seated—D. Travnicek, A. Hoppe, J. McGinnis, J. Gruber, Fr. Dominic, Director, R. Mertz, T. Morrow, T. O'Neil, J. McGuire.

In former years the Johnny Players were simply that group of students who were interested in dramatics as a form of extra-curricular activity. A play would be selected by the moderator and the cast would be picked. Other backstage assignments required in a play such as electricians, scenery and costume men, would be taken care of mostly by the actors or members of the group who were not in the cast of that play. That arrangement limped along because it placed no responsibility on anyone for those offstage jobs so essential to a play's success. Last year matters reached an ebb when there were no official Johnny Players, and thespians were chosen from the general student body.

1941

The Johnny Players



Stand: Ford, D. Tronick, F. Derkin, Jones.
Seating: Pate, Schoenberger, Baker, Arnold, Sherkin.

This year the Johnny Players dramatic club, one of the most popular extra-curricular activities on the Johnny campus, enjoys its 60th year of existence. For the past five years the club has been under the guidance and directorship of Rev. Dominic Keller, O.S.B., who took over the task at that time after returning from a two-year stay in Europe.

was presented to the student body on Sunday, November 17, 1941.

The play dealt with a lot made by William Magee, a novelist from New York City, that he could see at Balpaton Inn on Balpaton mountain and

of Reggie Thornhill, the blackmailer; and Theodore Penzica as Thomas Hayden, the railroad president.

Tom Pate, chief behind the stage, assisted by William "Chick" Tronick and James Kennedy as property and costume managers, kept things rolling backstage with the completely new setting, picked especially for "Seven Keys" by Al Funder, the artist extraordinaire of St. John's. Rounding out the cast were Heinz Arnold as Lou Max, the millionaire's right hand man; William Coleran as Jiggs Kennedy, police chief; Jim Griffin as the owner of Balpaton Inn; and George Rafts and Richard Weber as the sons of the law.

Several days after their first successful performance, the Players began work behind locked doors. Then on December 17, they unveiled a surprise one-act campus production, "Seven Keys." It was the story of the people's clamoring to be freed from the chains of materialism oppression. Urged on by a brave and fearless leader, Julian Earth, they triumphed in the end. The manager's job in this performance was comparatively easy in that only the bare stage with its red brick walls and several small props created the setting for what turned out to be a very interesting and somewhat educational production.

In the role of Julian Earth, Heinz Arnold led the cast, with Donald Sans as Small, Alvin Sherkin as Cornell, and Vince Schoenberger as Rockner in the chief supporting roles. Donald Tronick, Warren Baker, Leonard Kazita, Jerry Grace, Robert Pate and Edward Walsh made up the remainder



Scene from "Seven Keys to Balpaton."

of the cast along with a chorus composed of Bill Coleran, James Deas, Bill Spang, Francis Callane, Paul Stofer, Phillip Stack, Harold Elliott and Jim Kennedy.

For its Lenten production this year, the dramatic club brought back a very popular religious drama, "The Miraculous History of St. Bernard." The play was given on Friday, March 13, for the benefit of students of surrounding territory as well as those of St. John's. On Saturday and Sunday, March 14 and 15, it was again presented to the general public.



CAST OF "SEVEN KEYS TO BALPATON"

String: Griffin, McDowell, Arnold, Coleran, Sherkin, Sans, Schoenberger, Baker, Derkin, Penzica.

Standby: Rafts, Wilson, R. Weber, KUTTERMAN.

The Johnny Players club is "one of the most popular extra-curricular activities on the campus" under Fr. Dominic's guidance.

1942



Being single-gendered campuses posed challenges for Theater productions. Plays on both campuses seem to have been selected to minimize the number of male performers needed for St. Ben's productions...



The dance of the Irish lads and lassies in the "Lady of the Terrace."



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east
Vir-
ske,
ary
and
a

All of these parts are played by the Bennies, including the Irish "lads."

1940s

...and to avoid having Johnnies play female roles.



“Valley Forge” 1939

Likewise, plays at St. John’s were selected to avoid Johnnies having to play female roles...at least for the most part.

“The Great Theater of the World” 1951



1400+ Years of Benedictine History



were represented in St. Ben's annual Pageant by an entirely female cast.



Women play the sailors in this scene from a production of HMS Pinafore.

It was decades before students from SJU came to play the male roles.

A scene from H M S Pinafore given by students of the college

1942



In 1946, speech classes were taught within the English Department, and in 1951, within the Division of Languages & Literature.

1946

“The real achievement of the year, however, came this spring with the staging of HAMLET, especially re-written for a male cast by Father Dominic. The original five acts and twenty scenes were rearranged...while the character ERIC was inserted to take many of the lines that Shakespeare had originally given to the queen.”

Department of Speech

LOWER DIVISION

1 Speech Fundamentals I. Annually

A study of the factors that underlie effective speaking; the different types of speeches. Constant speaking practice afforded through classroom demonstration and appearances before other groups. Emphasis placed on good posture and diction, the development of a good speaking voice, and the ability to deliver a worthwhile message. Basic study of phonetics.

Semester credits 2

2 Speech Fundamentals II. Annually

Thorough study of the gathering, organization, and presentation of worthwhile speech materials; a study of the principles of argumentation and debate; participation in forensic activities; art of story telling acquired through appearance before groups of various ages. Continued study of phonetics.

Prerequisite: Speech I.

Semester credits 3

UPPER DIVISION

32 Interpretative Reading. Annually

Study of the vocal and mental technique necessary for the artistic oral interpretation of the forms of literature. Practical training in the development of voice flexibility, skilful and accurate diction through choral reading activities. Cutting and arrangement of modern, Shakespearean, and classic plays for recitals.

Prerequisite: Speech I, 2.

Semester credits 3

33-34 Play Production. Annually

Theories and problems of stage direction and production. The course includes work on scenery and properties, costuming, lighting, and make-up, learned through class study and stage productions.

Semester credits 4

The 1946-47 CSB catalog spells out the offerings by its Department of Speech, and still lists a course in Play Production.

1946-1947



1950 Things start to come together between the campuses.

Separate one-act plays on both campuses were performed together...sort of (one after the other)

**Bard's Gentlemen
Join The Ladies**

● Shakespeare, St. John's and St. Ben's will combine forces Thursday evening in the university auditorium for two one-act plays.

A group of Bennies belonging to the "Ardeleons," St. Ben's dramatic group, will present a comedy, "When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet," directed by Doris Bogut. "When Shakespeare's Gentlemen Get Together," featuring freshmen Johnny Players, will also appear on the same program. This latter skit was given earlier this year during a regular convocation period.

This Thursday evening presentation is the first exchange program this year between the two colleges.



"When Shakespeare's Ladies and Gents get together"



**When
Shakespeare's
Ladies Meet
backstage**

**(a photo I
include just for
the fun of it)**

1950

Three Performances Slated For "Our Lady's Juggler"

By Bill Benoit

● Performances of the opera *Our Lady's Juggler* for the student body will be given next Thursday and Friday, Nov. 29 and 30, at 8:00 p.m. in the college auditorium. A public performance, at which admission will be charged, will be given on Sunday, Dec. 2.

Under the direction of Rev. James Kelly, OSB, the cast of 60, which includes students from St. John's and the College of St. Benedict, is now making final preparations for the first opera to appear at St. John's.

Sister Firmin, OSB, choral director at St. Benedict's, is preparing the St. Benedict's choral club for the opening mixed chorus scenes and the angel chorus. Soloists from the angel chorus will be Joyce Hirsch, soprano, and Mary Noehring, mezzo soprano. Miss Ruth Allen, director of the dance at St. Benedict's, is coaching four Johnnies and four Bennies for dances in the opera. Miss Allen is also assisting Rev. Dominic Keller, OSB, who is in charge of stage direction.

Settings and costumes for the production have been designed by Gerald Bonnette, a St. John's art student, under the direction of Rev. Cloud Meinberg, OSB, and Mr. Frank Kacmarcik. The settings will be unusually simple, in the style of the 14th century. In

a modern form, but with similar simplicity, will be the design of the costumes, the fundamental garb consisting of tunics of different styles to denote the various classes of people in the cast.

The story of the opera goes back over 500 years into the middle ages, but the opera itself was not written until 1902, when it was first produced at Monte Carlo. It appeared in New York at the Manhattan Opera house in 1908, and again in 1924, but since that time it has been neglected. The St. John's production is the first in the United States in 25 years.

Opera Is Composer's Greatest

Massenet considered *Our Lady's Juggler* to be the greatest of his works. It is said to owe its existence to the fact that a porter fell

1951:
A mixed chorus and one Bennie with a role are in an opera at St. John's.

Heading the cast of 60 are Wallace Tomchek as John the Juggler, Hugh Bryant as Brother Boniface, Lavern Hoelscher as the prior, Matthew Crawford as the poet-monk, Dale Lungwitz as the painter monk, Richard Berg as the musician monk, and Richard Carey as the sculptor monk.

Mary Baxter, a student at St. Benedict's, will portray the statue of the Blessed Virgin, which comes to life when John sings and dances.



"PLACES. . . ACTION. . . MUSIC," and a full rehearsal of the cast and orchestra for *Our Lady's Juggler* concentrates the efforts of the opera's dozens of participants in the college auditorium as the presentation dates draw near.

March 1952:

“Bennies made their debut with the Johnny Players when the dramatic crews of the two schools merged for the production of the one-act play *Thor, With Angels*.”

Thor, With Angels

Bennies made their debut with the Johnny Players when the dramatic crews of the two schools merged for the production of the one-act play, *Thor With Angels*.

The poetry of Christopher Fry; a plot involving the conflict between the forces of paganism and Christianity; three Bennies and a number of old-timers of the local stage; and a goodly supply of trees and branches from the local woods—all these were used in the production of March 17 and 18.

The leading roles were played by Roger Kasprick, Bill Kelsch, and Jim Moraveck (veteran actor and oftentimes the Assistant to the Director), and three Bennies, Ludmila, Padrnos, Lois LaBonne, and Marianna Milroy.



Simon, played by Bill Kelsch, reveals his ten toward Christianity in a toast.



Another tender scene, or maybe it's backstage between scenes.

May 1952: A joint play, *Antigone*, is performed as a radio version by the Ardeleons of CSB & the Johnny Players

THE RECORD

Johnnies, Bennies Cooperate On Radio Version Of 'Antigone'

●The *Antigone* of Sophocles, a classical Greek tragedy, will be presented over St. John's-on-the-Air on May 7. Students from both St. John's and St. Benedict's will take part in the production.

Adapted for radio by Daniel M. White and the St. Genesius Players Guild of Canada, this half hour script has all the earmarks of a typical Greek tragedy, in particular the large number of fatal mishaps which occur throughout the play. It is the tale of a king who usurps a throne and annihilates quite a few people in doing so. Subsequent deaths in his family paint the moral that force is not the means to the end.

The following students were chosen for the cast at tryouts this week:

Announcer.....	Larry Donlin
Antigone.....	Janet Geray
Creon.....	Jim Moraveck
Ismene.....	Viviana Schirber
Heamon.....	Dave Lewis
Sentry.....	Tom O'Meara
Eurydice.....	Ludmila Padrnos

Local Demos Gird For Meet


●Eight St. John's students will represent the 6th congressional district at the state convention of the Young Democrat-Farmer-Labor organization at Mankato on May 2, 3, and 4.

The district will get one vote for each paid member and one additional vote for every 2,000 popular votes cast in this district for President Truman in the 1948 election.

St. John's students will serve on the credentials, rules, constitution, platform and resolutions, and nomination committees.

College of
St. Benedict

presents



MEMBERS OF CATHOLIC
THEATRE CONFERENCE

Ardeleons
and
Johnny Players

ANTIGONE

by Jean Anouilh

St. Joseph Auditorium
St. Joseph, Minnesota
May 11, 1952

...and apparently also performed in St. Joe

May 1953

La Boheme is the “first full-length standard-repertory opera ever presented at St. John’s”

The Word Got 'Round

The House Was Fully Packed

By Gary Gross

● *La Boheme*, the first full-length standard-repertory opera ever presented at St. John's, was enthusiastically received here last week at all three performances. Success of the opening night's production led to packed houses at subsequent performances. The word got round.

Use of the English version by Grist and Pinkerton, revised by Father James Kelly, made the opera completely intelligible to appreciative audiences.

An important factor in this signal success was the amazingly fine quality of the four principal voices, those of James Landwehr, Joyce Hirsch, Richard Berg, and Marilyn Yunkers.

The staging of the opera, under

the direction of Father Dominic Keller, OSB, was smooth and fluid. Particularly fine was the Latin Quarter street scene in the second act. It was an animated performance.

The chorus groups showed the effects of good discipline and training at the hands of Sister Firmin and Father Bartholomew, and Father James, from his position in the pit, did a marvelous job of molding the various groups into a harmonious unit.

Paul Huber and Robert Southers collaborated in designing the sets; they were simple but very effective. Even the costumes seemed to fit better than usual.

All in all, the opera proved to be a great popular success. Enthusiasm on the campus has not yet subsided.



PACKED HOUSES acclaimed the Johnny-Benny production of *La Boheme*, first standard opera to be produced at St. John's. Marilyn Yunkers' performance in the role of Musetta was one of the high points in the production.

November 1953

Bennies & Johnnies taking
the stage together has
now become the norm

Record

Johnnies, Bennies Join For Fry Play

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY AND ORGAN OF THE ALUMNI

By Tom McGraw

St. John's University, St. John's, Minnesota, Friday, November 13, 1953

Number 17

● First-nighters at *The Lady's Not For Burning* tomorrow

will get a look at one of Christopher Fry's more popular plays, acted by a combined group of the Johnny Players and the Ardeleons of St. Ben's.

Using the old theme of love, dressed by the playwright in poetic comedy, the play is, in many ways, a marked contrast to his poetic drama *The Wink and the Angel* produced here in 1952. Directed by Rev. Dominic Keller, O.S.B., the three-act play will finish its run Sunday evening with the second performance.



William Chisholm

A newcomer to the Johnny stage, William Chisholm, is cast in the male lead as Thomas Mendip, a war-soured pessimist, who hopes to quit the occupation of living by the command of Mayor Hebble Tyson, acted by James Motl.

The audience begins to see which way the wind is blowing as the female lead, Jennet Jourdemayne, portrayed by Mary Anne Gellie, enters the plot to give a spark of hope to the despair of Mendip.

Richard Betting as Richard, the Mayor's clerk, and Jacquelyn Ulmer, as Alison Elliot, take care of the sub-romance. Alison, fresh from a convent cloister, leads a rather complicated life—loved by Richard, chased by Nicholas Devise, and engaged to Humphrey Devise. Cast in the role of the Devise brothers are James Nolan as Nicholas and Dave Lewis as Humphrey. Margaret Devise, the mother of the two brothers, who is a never-get-flustered sort of person, is played by Nancy Hynes.

Rounding out the cast of 11 "characters" are Gerald Fix as the chaplain, William O'Fallon as Justice Edward Tappercorn,



A SCENE from *The Lady's Not For Burning*, Christopher Fry's poetic comedy on the theme of witchcraft. Produced jointly by the Johnny Players and the Ardeleons of St. Ben's, the play will be given here tomorrow night and Sunday.

Here's a 1954
extravaganza
with a huge cast.



Die
Fledermaus

1954

In 1962 St. Ben's Department of Speech became the *Department of Speech & Drama* – offering courses leading to a minor in it in that year, and a major in Speech and Drama by 1964...

SPEECH AND DRAMA

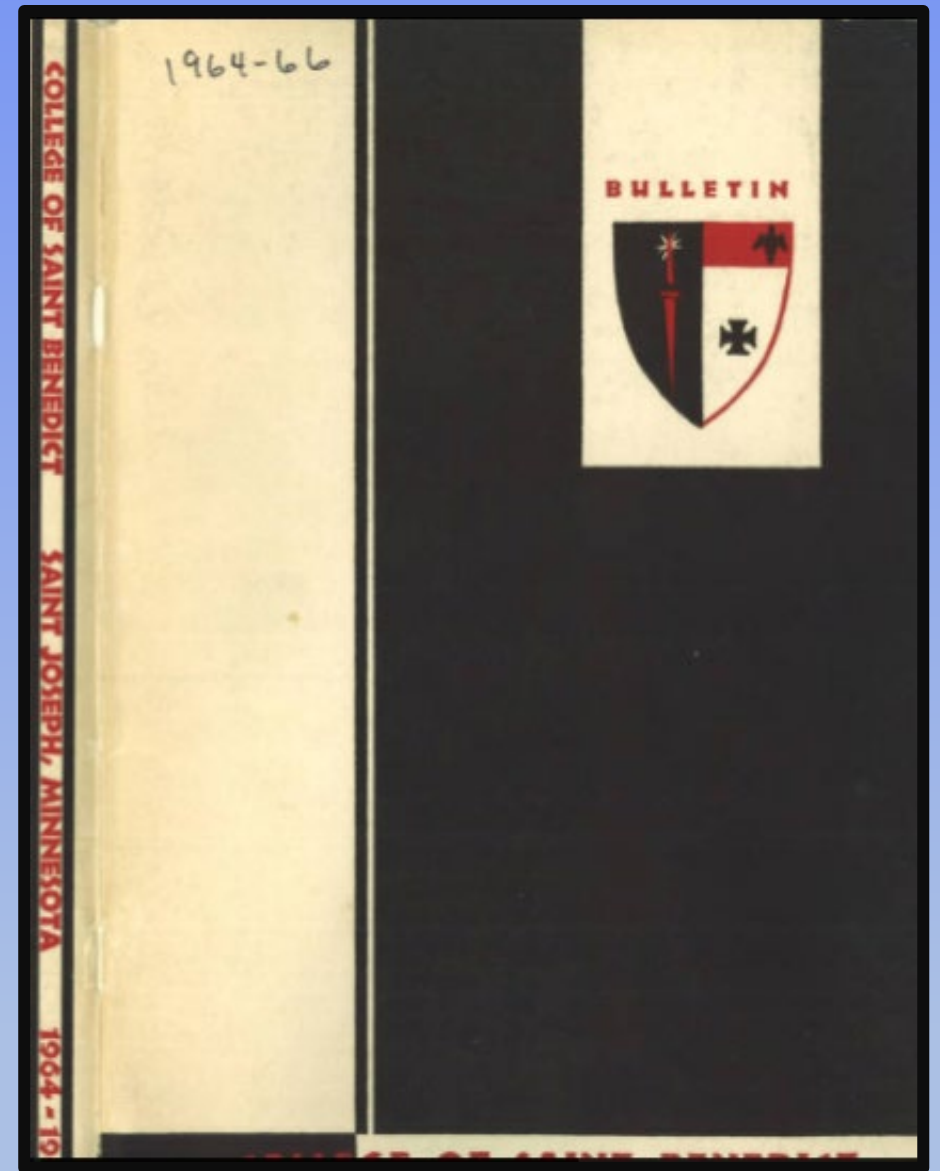
Major sequence: Courses 1 or 2, 3-4, 5 and 27 in lower division; 33, 41, 42, and twelve credits in upper division.

Minor sequence: Courses 1 or 2, 5, 27, and an additional ten credits.

Students are advised to take courses in related fields of art, music, history, English, philosophy, political science, and home-economics. They are required to elect Art 2 and voice.

Students who wish to teach speech in Minnesota must hold a certificate of endorsement based upon the completion of a minor sequence in speech.

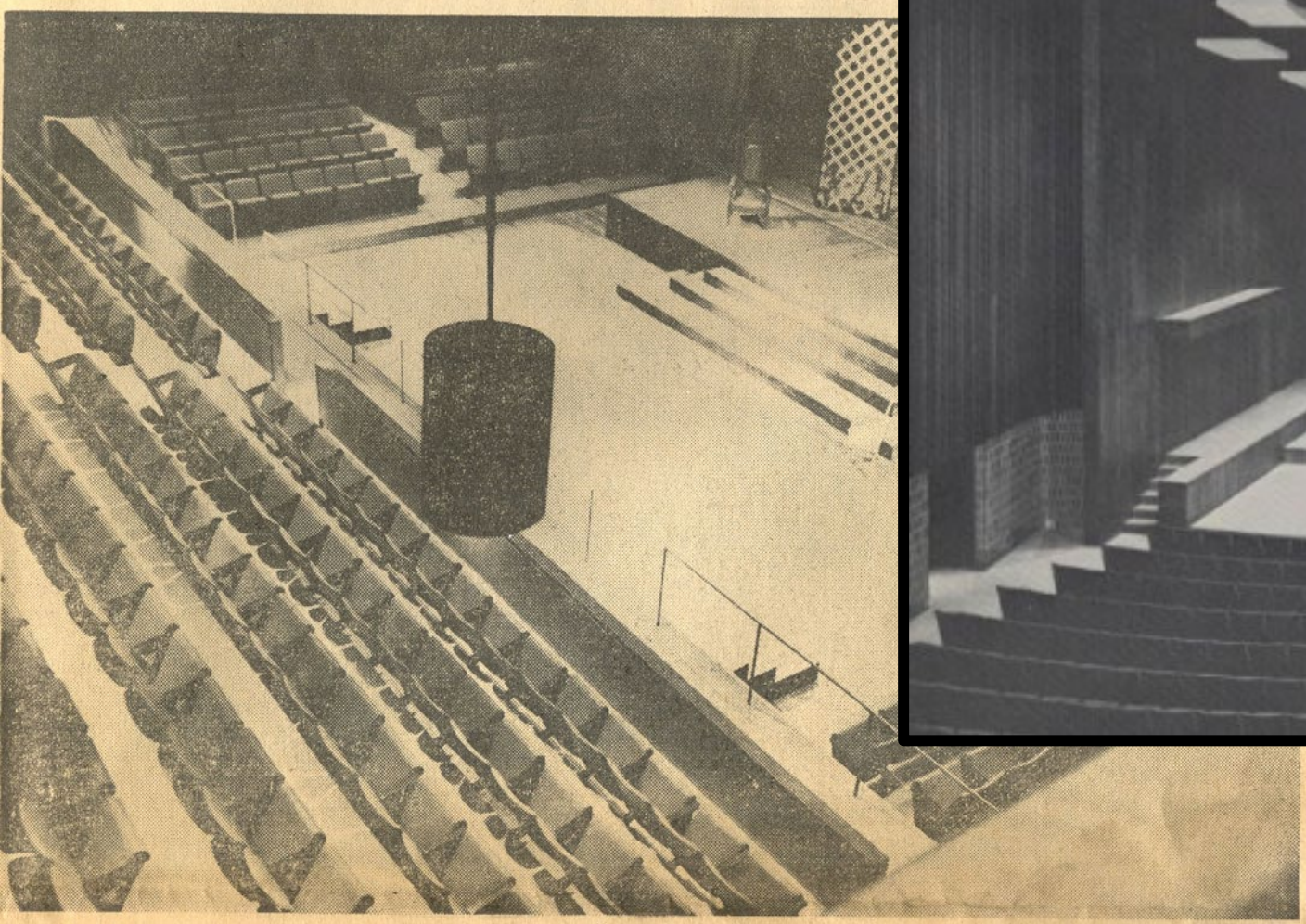
- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 1 | Speech Fundamentals | 2 CREDITS |
| | Principles underlying effective speech. Practice in composition and delivery of various types of speeches, with emphasis on content, organization, body control, and diction. | |
| 2 | Speech Fundamentals | 2 CREDITS |
| | Same as Speech 1. Taught second semester. | |
| 3-4 | History of the Theatre | 2 CREDITS |
| | A survey of theatrical activity from its beginnings until the present. (Offered simultaneously with History 1-2.) | |
| 5 | Drama Form (English 51) | |
| | Development of dramatic form in comedy and tragedy from Greek to moderns. | |



Sister Colman O'Connell, M.F.A. *Speech and Drama*
 B.A. College of Saint Benedict, 1950; M.F.A. Catholic University of America, 1954.
 College of Saint Benedict, 1954—

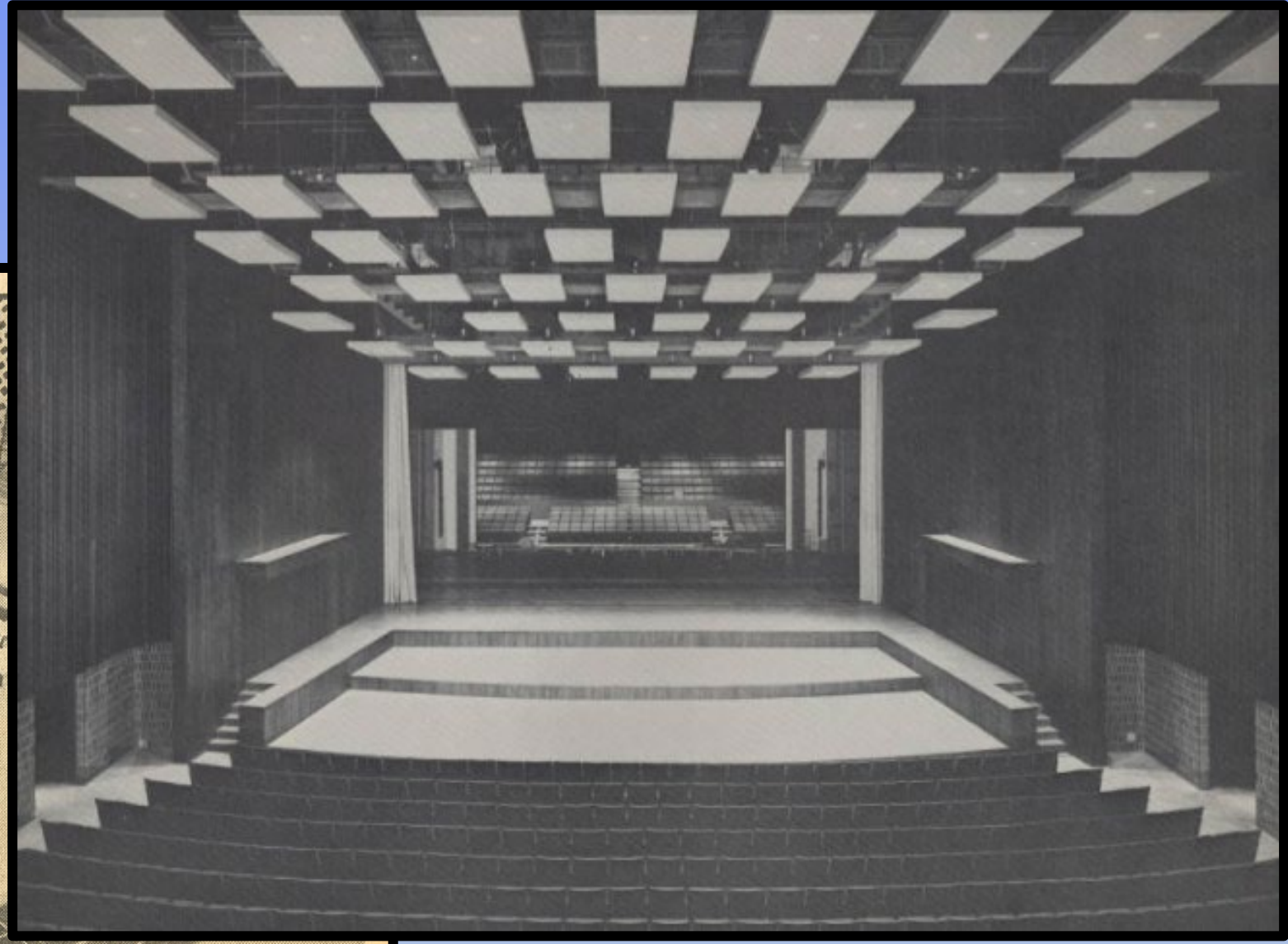
1964-66

...an addition no doubt directly related to the completion, in 1964, of the stunning performance venue, the **Benedicta Arts Center**.



THE 350-SEAT FORUM will be used for the first time on July 24th, 25 and 26 when "The Ladies of Soissons" will be presented at the college. With three-quarter round seating, the

small theater permits intimate staging of dramatic productions and the flexible riser stage allows for apron, pit, proscenium or regular stage productions.



1964

1966: Two years later, in 1966, St. Ben's Department of Speech & Drama becomes the Department of Communication & Theatre, a title replicated at St. John's the same year.

DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE

COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE

St. John's University: *Dr. James Jakša, Rev. Dominic Keller, Rev. Daniel Durken, Rev. Alcuin Siebenand*; The College of Saint Benedict: *Sister Colman O'Connell, Mr. Donald Mullin*

The Interinstitutional Department of Communication and Theatre offers the student an opportunity to develop in the practical and aesthetic areas of communication through the media of public address, theatre, broadcasting, journalism, and mass communication. A major is available in public address, teaching, or theatre.

A combination of academic courses and co-curricular activities provide the student with a variety of education experiences. Active co-curricular programs are available in forensics, theatre, radio, and journalism.

Inter-institutional Curriculum of the College of Saint Benedict and St. John's University.

MAJOR SEQUENCE: Thirty credits. Courses to be determined by departmental chairman at individual institutions to meet the student's needs, aptitudes, and interests.

MINOR SEQUENCE: Eighteen credits. Courses to be determined by departmental chairman at individual institutions to meet the student's needs, aptitudes, and interests.

CSB/SJU Catalog

CSB Catalog 1966-68

1966: Though still separate, the two departments offer an “Inter-institutional” curriculum, and have the same requirements.

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1966: Communication and Theatre requires students to be “joint”

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE



Inter-institutional Curriculum of the College of Saint Benedict and St. John's University.

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It is the first academic department requiring that its majors take courses at both campuses.

There was still a department chair on each campus until 1970...

1966: Communication and Theatre requires students to be “joint”

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE



Inter-institutional Curriculum of the College of Saint Benedict and St. John's University.

MAJOR SEQUENCE: Thirty credits. Courses to be determined by departmental chairman at individual institutions to meet the student's needs, aptitudes, and interests.

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...when there is one chair and, from the other campus, an “associate chair.”

1970 is also the year when Fr. Dominic's name no longer appears among the theater faculty. (He was 68 by then.)

DOWN IN THE VALLEY
down in the arena
March 13, 14, & 15 at 8 o'clock

the PROMPTER

theatre st. ben's

MARCH 10, 1969

vol. 3 no. 2

We seem to have experienced our first SJU/CSB riot. At least, one of the Johnnies was maced, so it must have been a riot at the basketball game last week. Now we are in the big leagues along with all those other great schools, like Berkeley, who have students rioting for good causes.

The tryouts for ALICE IN WONDERLAND were great. Seldom have I seen so many actors with potential audition. It bodes well of the production. Some of the tryout skits were as funny as the play will be.

If you would like to participate in ALICE, it is not too late. For you people who like to sew or to do carpentry and would like to know how your skills are adapted to theatre, come see or call Gordon Vogel, ALICE's director. We would be glad to have you join our company of childrens' theatre producers.

LORENZO THE MONSTER is fast becoming one of the most contemporary pieces of theatre ever to be produced in a Minnesota college. It is almost pure dramatic experimentation: a rock band on stage, poses instead of props, associational slides on two screens, and many other novel features. Combined, they make one of the most powerful events ever to be done at Theatre St. Ben's. The message and the method mark the show as a rare drama, one which one wouldn't expect west of New York.

LORENZO is the first play this year to have its lights designed by a student, John Theisen. Having students participate more and more in the planning stages of a show, and not just in the acting areas, is indicative of the strides which Theatre St. Ben's is taking toward making theatre a more useful, practicable, and complete experience for students. Maggie McKeown and Jon Prince are assisting Theisen in working

think SPRING flowers, daisies, marigolds, petunias, poppies, lilacs, carnations, roses, hi ho.

out the lighting problems posed by a largely experimental production like LORENZO.

Other student-produced segments of the show are the slides which four Johnnies, Tom Bsmbenek, Mike Horstman, John Siebenand, and Ron Pesler, see as a way of involving the audience more intimately with the problems dealt with in the play.

Two of our instructors, Terry Stoner and Marie Winckler, appeared prominently in a dance program last Friday and Saturday at the Guild of Performing Arts in Minneapolis. Terry and Marie teach dance to CSB/SJU students each week at the Arts Center. They have increased interest in dance on the two campuses because of their fine abilities as well as their wonderful personalities which enable them to teach students who have never thought of dancing before. Once a person gets involved in dance, he finds it fascinating.

PAUL WINTER CONTEMPORARY CONSORT

March 14, 1969 8 o'clock

A group of superb musicians with a program of classical, folk, and jazz pieces. They have played at the White House at Presidential request.

GLEN TETLEY DANCE TROUPE

March 18, 1969 8 o'clock

Extraordinarily talented dance group. Truly modern concept of dance.

Both shows are in the BAC Auditorium.

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S

TO: J. Albee, C. Bates, B. Garski, M. Henderson, M. Holman, L. Kostrabala, B. Malcolm, M. McKeown, J. Messenger, L. Mohs, C. Moore, L. Olson, B. Plate, J. Prince, W. Richtman, R. Sickmann, S. Sonstegard, R. Studer, J. Theisen, R. Wenner, L. Weydert, T. Williams, and J. Wollmering.

Three years later, this Theatre newsletter, "The Prompter," is clearly issued by

theatre st. ben's

1969

COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE

SAINT JOSEPH
MINNESOTA 56374

Feb. 3, 1972

Technical Staff;

In an attempt to utilize the BAC (add the Sju Aud.) for an educational purpose within the performing structure, to acquire more hours coverage from the same amount of money, and to hopefully render better services to the institutions, a feeder program has begun. In the first 18 months of this program, it has been redefined several times and each change has meant an improvement. When the full time technician left the BAC in the summer of 1969, the salary which was approved for the forthcoming year was split into three full tuition scholarships for three then SJU interested students. It was our hope then that some of the money could even be recovered from and through the OEO program or work

contracts for the potential technician and have shown. The first year year. It did provide leadership. Next years leadership and interested students and the CSB student use potential make a plan to include. As originator and on my shoulders program as I far outweigh the ship, organization it justifies having

COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE

SAINT JOSEPH
MINNESOTA 56374

Feb. 3, 1972

Cost: One student stage manager: Tuition plus 100 per month.

Two student technical assistants: tuition only

Three or more work contracts (freshman)

This years actual cost: Stage manager: 1700+900= 2600

Tech. Assits: 1700= 3400

Work contracts: normal 6000

This years expense is really below this figure as both Jan Lathen and Jim Sheeley

have 350 and 500 dollar work awards and free

contracts. Also with the increased need to

we have used more students and I hope expanded

It is essential to this program that a "feeder" and carried through. There would then be no (Corbett) reverts to stage manager.

SJU: One Stage manager student position: Work Contract

Two assistants: Work Contract

Availability of tech assistants pool at CSB

A COMBINED DEPARTMENT WITH SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

A COMBINED DEPARTMENT WITH SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Another three years later:
This one might be a joint
publication...or maybe not!

1972

Being discussed in the early 1970s:

Should Communication and Theatre become two separate departments?

Should Communication and Theatre become two separate departments?

- A. Differences between the two major areas of study suggest that division is logical.
 1. To some extent, the faculty of the two areas operate independently, controlling budget, co-curricular activities, and many of the decisions concerning course offerings and teaching assignments.
 2. Students in the two areas of study appear to be of quite different types--communication attracts those who intend to use their skills in pursuit of career goals in business, law, and public relations, while theatre draws those interested in pursuing careers in the performing arts.
 3. Beyond the freshman-sophomore level, the two areas of study have little common subject matter.

- B. There are both academic and economic reasons for retaining the combined department.
 1. Academic overlap requires that the two faculties work in cooperation.
 - a. Speech education majors, according to Minnesota State Law, must have training in both theatre and public address in order to be certified.
 - b. Students in both specializations need common core courses in fundamentals of oral communication, communication process, and oral interpretation. Interaction of students and faculty from both areas in these courses provides valuable balance of perspectives.
 - c. Because the current faculty have training and experience in both areas of specialization, they provide valuable discussion of matters pertaining to both areas.
 2. Economy of money and effort is gained by working in combination.
 - a. Duties of department chairmen--such as reports and representation to administration--can be fulfilled by one chairman with the cooperation of an associate chairman.
 - b. Core courses can be taught most efficiently by drawing on the staff of both specializations, ensuring the availability to students of both core and upper division course offerings.
 3. Conditions which have necessitated the division of communication and theatre at other schools do not prevail at SJU-CSB.
 - a. Because budgets are not combined, there is not the problem of over-financing one area at the expense of the other.
 - b. The staff is not so large and so specialized that faculty members have no interest in or capacity for discussing matters outside their area of specialization.
 - c. The staff respect and value the interaction of ideas and perspectives which occurs as they conduct department business.

by Karen Garvin

State Certification requirements include an experience in theory and practice of broadcast media. This may be met with one term's work with the College radio station (no academic credit).

Speech-Theater Arts: Forty credits plus the prerequisite, Fundamentals of Oral Communication 111, if needed: 101, 102, 113 and 115, 114 and 116, 122 (Speech Communication Department), 223, 235 (Speech Communication), 350A (Speech Communication), 322 (Speech Communication), 240 for 2 credits, 013 (Speech Communication), 333 or 221 or 222, 260, Art 225 or Art 305.

111 FUNDAMENTALS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

Principles underlying effective oral communication. Practice in presentation of various types of oral communication with emphasis on content, organization, language, body control, and voice. Experienced speech students may apply to department chairman for exemption. Offered both terms. 4 credits

122 COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Basic elements of interpersonal interaction, including the use of both verbal and non-verbal message systems.

220 ELEMENTS OF MODERN JOURNALISM

An attempt to combine a conventional theory and technique course in journalism with an equal treatment of the increasing pressures and hazards of modern news gathering and how professional journalists and their critical audience cope with them. Frequent guest professional journalists. 4 credits

322 ADVANCED PUBLIC SPEAKING

Theory and practice of public speaking. Selected readings on various aspects of speech theory. Analysis and criticism of outstanding public speeches. Prerequisite: 111. 4 credits

350 DIRECTED SEMINARS

These upper-division studies in specialized interest areas are designed to permit systematic instruction in a semi-independent program of study. Open to non-majors with permission of the instructor.

350A PERSUASION

Principles of persuasion explored in analysis of student projects and/or persuasive campaigns conducted in politics, advertising or public relations.

350B GREAT SPEECHES

Survey of great speeches past and present. Considered in terms of historical-sociological-psychological context. 4 credits

350C RHETORICAL CRITICISM

An examination of the basic modes of speech analysis. Developing an understanding of basic rhetorical principles, as a means for examining and evaluating public speeches. 4 credits

350D INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Advanced study of interpersonal interaction, with possible emphases on general semantics, sensitivity training, therapeutic relationships.

350E SMALL GROUPS

Advanced study of small group deliberation, including relationships of groups to larger organizational structures.

350F FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Study of First Amendment rights and responsibilities as defined by the court system and the effect of judicial rulings on the practice of free speech.

350G CONTEMPORARY AGITATION

Rhetorical analysis of contemporary social-political movements.

371 INDEPENDENT STUDY

Supervised reading or historical, descriptive, creative or experimental research for the student with special interests. Registration with the approval of the department chairman. 1-4 credits

THEATER

Robert Devereaux; Judy Jerde; Kerry Lafferty; Sister Colman O'Connell (Chairperson); David Partington; Paula Rahders; Terry Stoner; David Swanson; Marie Winckler.

The Theater Department contains a choice of courses designed to fit varying needs of students for both theory and skills in theater arts: dramatic literature, history, acting, technical theater and design. In addition to the major sequence in Theater, the department offers, in cooperation with the Speech Communication Department, three sequences for teachers: Theater Arts; Speech; and Speech-Theater Arts.

Creative participation of students in each season's productions is emphasized. In addition, these productions are supplemented by touring plays, film classics, dance troupes and lectures brought to the campus to widen the horizons of participating students. From the mixture of creative activity and imported example, the student will acquire an awareness of theater as a major force in the life of the community and the nation.

A Special Program in modern dance, The Professional Dance Studio, is offered under the auspices of the Theater Department. See description below.

MAJOR SEQUENCE: Forty credits to be decided by the student in consultation with an adviser from the Theater staff from the following: 101, 102, 113, 114, 115, 116, 200, 221, 222, 223, 240, 241, 242, 250, 251, 260, 327, 333, 334, 337, 338, 339, 366, 371. Normally, two 2-credit courses are combined to make the usual student course load.

MAJOR SEQUENCES FOR TEACHERS: Theater Arts: Forty credits from theater and one four-credit Art course from the following: 101, 102, 113 and 115, 114 and 116, 122 (Speech Communication Department), 240 for 2 credits, 223, 260, 327, 333 or 221, 241 or 242, 334 or 222, 337 or 338 and Art 225 or Art 305.

Most of the other academic departments didn't "merge" until the 1980s.

Speech: See Speech Communication Department

101 DANCE FOR LAYMEN I

An introduction to dance for those who wish to experience movement as an enrichment to their lives. (Students taking dance to fulfill the Physical Education requirement are reminded that a full term of dance earns one credit.) Offered both terms.

S-U grading 1 credit

Answer:

In 1973 there are two departments:

Speech
Communication
and
Theater

...with Sister Colman as Theater's sole chairperson.



COVID-19 Resources and Fall 2021 Information

- CSB/SJU Theater
- Mission and Learning Goals
- 2021-2022 Season
- Theater Curriculum
- Faculty and Staff
- Past Productions
- Student Resources
- Frequently Asked Questions

Theater Department

Home / CSB/SJU Theater / Past Productions

Past Productions

Catch a glimpse of some of the plays we've encourage, and find out what's happening

2019-20

The Lesson and The Bald Soprano by Eugene Ionesco
Directed by Kaarin Johnston
Colman Theater, College of Saint Benedict,

Photograph 51 by Anna Ziegler
Directed by Sean Dooley
Colman Theater, College of Saint Benedict, October 2019

The Secret Worlds of Women by CSB Students
Directed by Kaarin Johnston
Gorecki Family Theater, College of Saint Benedict, November 2019

There is a partial list on the CSB Archives website of past Theater productions. It's a work in progress in association with the Theater Department's Kaarin Johnston.

- > *The Man Who Came to Dinner*- F '52
- > *Peter Pan* - F '52
- > *Everyman* - Sp '52
- > *Antigone (Anouilh)* - Sp '52
- > *Christmas on the Village Square* - F '51
- > *As You Like It* - Sp '51
- > *Shakespearean One Acts* - 1950
- > *Alice in Wonderland* - ?
- > *The Boy with the Cart* - ?
- > *Playboy of the Western World* - ?
- > *Much Ado About Nothing* - ?
- > *1950s Miscellaneous*

1940s

- > *The Young and the Fair* - F '49
- > *The Miser* - Sp '49
- > *Twelfth Night* - Sp '48
- > *Our Town* - Sp '46
- > *Pygmalion*- Sp '42
- > *Letters to Lucerne*- Sp '42
- > *The Tidings Brought to Mary* - F '41
- > *The Heiress* - ?
- > *Antigone* - ?
- > *Miscellaneous Programs*

1920s and 1930s

- > *Pictures*

Theater at St. Ben's

- 1916 Department of Expression
- 1938 Department of Speech
- 1962 Department of Speech & Drama – a minor
- 1964 Dept. of Speech & Drama – **a major; BAC built**
- 1966 **Department of Communication & Theater**
- 1970 **One chair**, one associate chair
- 1973 **Theater Dept.**, including Modern Dance:

Dance for the layman satisfies the physical education requirements. A special program in modern dance, The Professional Dance Studio, is offered under the auspices of the theater department. See description below.

Compiled in October 2021
from resources in the archives of the
College of Saint Benedict,
Saint John's University, and
Saint Benedict's Monastery
by Peggy Landwehr Roske, CSB/SJU Archivist.
All rights reserved.

Milestones

Theater at St. John's

- 1940 Public Speaking classes offered
- 1945 Public Speaking, Dominic Keller
- 1946 Speech classes within the English Dept.
- 1951 Speech classes within Div. of Lang & Lit
- 1966 **Department of Communication & Theatre**
- 1970 **One chair**, one associate chair, **no Fr. Dominic**
- 1973 Speech Communication is a separate dept & major
- 1984 SJU's Auditorium is renovated into:

