

Miami summer theatre highlights the Midwest

By Ellen Blevens
For adventure!

Miami University Summer Theatre (MUST) will be busy this summer, as it presents Rodger's and Hammerstein's "State Fair" and William Inge's "Picnic" throughout July in Gates-Abegglen Theatre Center for Performing Arts.

"We wanted plays that would speak about the Midwest and would go together well," Paul Jackson, Chair of the Theatre Department said. "We wanted shows that would draw the audience in."

"State Fair" the story of the Frake family venturing to the Iowa state fair, features Rodger's and Hammerstein's songs "It's a Grand Night for Singing" and "It Might as Well Be Spring." Set in the rural midwest, "State Fair" presents old-fashioned family fun. At the fair, Father is showing his prized hog Blue Boy. Mother is entering her mince-ment, and their grown children are looking for love.

"State Fair" is directed by Bill Brewer, adjunct faculty in communications. Jack Liles, a 20-year member of Miami's music faculty, provides the musical direction.

"State Fair" opens at 8 p.m. on July 12. The opening includes a 6:30 p.m. champagne reception

If you go ...

WHAT: Miami University Summer Theatre presents "State Fair" and "Picnic"

WHEN: "State Fair" - 8 p.m., July 12, 13, 18, 19, 21, 25, and 28, 2 p.m. July 22 and 29. "Picnic" - 8 p.m. July 14, 20, 26, and 27, 2 p.m. July 15 and 21

WHERE: Gates-Abegglen Theatre, Center for Performing Arts, Miami University, Oxford

HOW MUCH: \$11 adult, \$9 students/seniors, \$7 for children. Call (513) 529-3200.

at the Heistand Galleries, School of Fine Arts. The free reception officially opens the MUST season and also displays two art exhibits at the Heistand.

Additional performances of "State Fair" are at 8 p.m. on July 13, 18, 19, 21, 25, and 28 and at 2 p.m. on July 22 and 29.

William Inge's "Picnic" tells the story of dissatisfaction and entrapment in a small town environment. A handsome drifter arrives in a small Kansas town and stirs the emotions of

the women in the town in many different ways. "Picnic" was a winner of the Pulitzer Prize and Critic's Circle Award.

"Picnic" is directed by Mark Seamon, a recent graduate in the



Left to right: Stephanie Dannemiller, Andrew Burkhart and Marianne Porter, Aaron Rossini star in the Miami University Summer Theatre production of "Picnic."

masters program in theatre at Miami. He will be entering a doctoral program at the University of Michigan in the fall.

William Inge's play will open at 8 p.m. on July 14, followed by a post-show reception.

Additional performances are at 8 p.m. on July 20, 26, and 27 and at 2 p.m. on July 15 and 21.

According to Jackson, preparation for the two plays has been a year-long process. He praises

Executive Producer Lin Conway, and also the actors.

"Most of the students are theatre majors, but there are some people from the community and students from other schools," he said.

Single tickets are \$7 for children 12 years and under, \$9 for students and senior citizens and \$11 general admission.

Two-play coupons are available, \$10 for children 12 and under

Courtesy Miami University Summer Theatre

Shriver Center, Aaron Rossini star in the Miami

\$14 for students and senior citizens and \$18 general admission. A coupon for \$1 off select performances is available at the Miami University Art Museum.

Tickets are on sale at the Miami box office, located in the Shriver Center. Box office hours are 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call (513) 529-3200.