

Here is a scene from the third act of Molnar's "Olympia" when it was produced by the University Playhouse under the direction of Miss Ida Z. Kirk in February. The players are, left to right, Josephine Landsittel, Wichita, Kansas; Bresse Holt-schue, Oklahoma City; Louise Paschall, Oklahoma City; Joe Callaway, Ardmore; Harriet Stewart, Muskogee; and William Cope, Oklahoma City.



## Soonerland Drama

By JOE A. CALLAWAY

LOOKING at the University objectively, one beholds a great organism composed of many atomic parts, each an entity in itself, yet each bound together by a very definite relation to the whole.

There are the lawyers reviewing their cases grouped together over coffee in the Union cafeteria, the engineers in their laboratories of research, the artists and painters held together by their art studios, the journalists revolving about the Press building, the business students at the Administration building, the physical education students on their athletic fields and the students interested in drama and the stage brought together through mutual interests.

Each group is held together by forces probably greater than those of fraternal brotherhoods since here is a brotherhood of life-time interest.

It is such a spirit that exists among students in the school of dramatic art—their enthusiasm directed toward the stage and its problems. The Playhouse and the Studio Theatre are their means of expression. And although the activities of the students of the stage are not as well known as those of the football team, there is a general interest when plays are scheduled and presented.

Here—in the Fine Arts building—students are being trained as actors (two are on Broadway now), working producers, designing scenewrights, lighting experts, as well as to possess a better appreciation of the theatre and a higher taste for things dramatic.

The school is the ultimate outgrowth of years of creative effort and continuous de-

velopment. Since the days when the only form of dramatic performance on the campus consisted of a burlesque of the Ben Greet Players or a negro minstrel until the production of Ferenc Molnar's latest play, "Olympia," new courses have been added to the curriculum and the teaching staff increased and improved. Until seven years ago, the school was under the heading "Department of Expression."

About 1918 the Drama League, first organization of talent on the campus, presented "The Seven Keys to Baldpate" and "The Tempest." This group changed its name to The Blue Curtain in 1923, later emerging into the Theatre Guild, which was active until the present Playhouse came into being in 1927.

O. U. is the only university in the southwest which offers a four-year course in dramatic art leading to a Bachelor's degree.

Practical play production is the basic idea upon which this school is organized. Six or more full-length plays are produced each season with a part of the ninety students of the school serving in the cast, the stage, costume, or lighting crews. Four well trained, experienced, theatre-wise instructors, Rupel J. Jones, Ida Z. Kirk, J. W. Dunn, and L. A. Hayden, each direct a full-length production during the year.

Perfection of the settings, which are made in the well-equipped scenic studio, has become so usual that audiences now take them for granted. These settings have as their only purpose to assist and emphasize the actor. Also aiding in this

respect is the ingenious manner in which they are lighted.

The technical work involved in the continuous production of plays constitutes the major activity of the department and brings the student face to face with the practical problems of the theatre at the same time that he is studying the theory in the class room.

Amateur acting, endured many times in the past only for the sake of loyalty to the school, has taken on new meaning. With intelligent, conscientious direction, there is produced a result which brings credit to the players and, it is hoped, will bring a reputation to the university.

Representative works of our better known dramatists are included on each season's bill. Last year plays by George Kelly, Hatcher Hughes, O'Neill, Jerome Ibsen, Shakespeare, and Shaw were presented. This year, Rachel Crother's "As Husbands Go" was produced at the same time as the continued Broadway run.

Each summer a Shakespearian comedy is produced before an average audience of two thousand. The attendance during the regular session, however, is quite small, there sometimes being more professors and townspeople in the audience than students. The most likely reason for this is that the average student's taste runs more toward the fan dance, minstrel, or musical show offered occasionally by the moving picture houses than toward intellectual drama. If more publicity were given the plays, however, the attendance would certainly increase.

The studio theatre, located on the third floor of the Fine Arts building, fully equipped, and having a seating capacity

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of one hundred, offers more practical experience for the majority of the students than any other training factor of the school. These productions are executed in connection with dramatic art courses. They consist of full length and one-act plays selected, directed, and produced by students as laboratory projects. Criticisms are offered by the faculty. Approximately seventy plays are being presented on the studio stage this season, many of them written or adapted by students.

It was for the first dramatic society on the campus that Lynn Riggs, '23ex, one of the country's most promising playwrights, wrote his first play for produc-

tion. Riggs has had four of his plays produced on Broadway.

The Playhouse is quite anxious to encourage native playwrights by producing all worthwhile material.

Jones, director of the school, is at the head of the seventh region of the National Theatre Conference. In this division, which includes Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, are found two of the best Little Theatres in the country—La Petite group of New Orleans, and the Dallas organization. Jones has announced a regional conference will be held at the University April 13 and 14. A nationally known leader will speak.

## Sooner Roll Call

### Directory Changes

Mrs. Betty Coley Boynton, '22 as, 338 Woodlawn, Topeka, Kansas.  
Mrs. Frances Mahier Brandon, '30home-ec, 611 Main Street, Natchez, Mississippi.  
Mary H. Brazell, '29as, Lamont.  
Jack Alfred Brosseau Jr., '32eng, 7th and Hudson Streets, Firestone Service, Ft. Worth, Texas.  
Floyd Lester Campbell, '28eng Charles Street, Banning, California.  
Albert Pike Craig, '30bus, Okmulgee.  
Mrs. Audine Drew Prewitt, '28ed, 5012 Gwynn Oak, Baltimore, Maryland.  
Mrs. Martha Garber Earle, '31as, The Westchester, Apt. 455, Washington, D. C.  
Mrs. Eva Setliff Earnhart, '29as, Atwood.  
Ernest M. Harkens, '27bus, 2915 Oklahoma Avenue, Muskogee.  
Mrs. Virginia Kruse Holliday, '29as, 1518 Northwest Fifteenth, Oklahoma City.  
Dix Huston, '32bus, Crescent.  
Jack Levering, '29as, Box 660, Tyler, Texas.  
Russell W. Lewis, '32med, Eastern State Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.  
Mrs. Ruth Evangeline Linden Courter, '24as, Yuma, Arizona.  
J. Thomas McGlothlin, '28geol, 965 Washington Avenue, Apt. 8, Denver, Colorado.  
Jack L. Manning, '30as, Manila Trading and Supply Company, Manila, P. I.  
Leigh Chalmers Masterson, '28geol, 216 West Alabama, Houston, Texas.  
Dr. William Henry Newlin, '33med, Jenks.  
Marlin D. Phillips, '29ph c, care G. N. Wilkie, Claremont, California.  
Joe Charles Revelette, '32bus, 12 A Ware Street, Suite 3, Cambridge, Massachusetts.  
Lee A. Robinson, '29as, 1423 Ocean Avenue, Long Beach, California.  
A. H. Sills, '24as, '27M.A., 1223 First Avenue, S. W., Ardmore.  
Claude Southward, '22as, '29M.A., Sand Springs.  
Jonnie Mae Thompson, '26home-ec, Box 567, Randlett.  
Mrs. June Wyatt White, '33 music, 1609 West Thirty-third Street, Oklahoma City.  
Inez Wood, '29ed, Route 2, Box 303, Phoenix, Arizona.  
C. B. Wysong, '23as, 210 North Galena Street, Dixon, Illinois.

### Deaths

Miss Mary Louise Street, '31as, died unexpectedly January 29 in an Oklahoma City hospital. Miss Street had been ill only a few days with a throat ailment.

### Marriages

HUMPHREY-ENGLISH: Miss Emily Humphrey and Charles English, '23ex, February 6 in Chickasha. Home, Lawton.

WELLS-McFARLAND: Miss Mary Wilma Wells, '33ex, and John O. McFarland, '32ex, February 3. Home, Norman.

YOUNG-PIPKIN: Miss Betty Young and James Anton Pipkin, '32ex, February 3 in Oklahoma City. Delta Tau Delta. Home, Miami.



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