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Giving new life to the historic Morris Theatre lobby

Summary: Nine students attending the 35th Annual Henjum Creative Study Institute at the University of Minnesota, Morris have painted a mural in the lobby of the Morris Theatre. The work has already "given new life" to the historic structure.

(July 3, 2008)-Nine students attending the 35th Annual Henjum Creative Study Institute at the University of Minnesota, Morris painted a mural at the Morris Theatre on June 24 and 25 under the direction of Michael Eble, UMM assistant professor of studio art and curator of the Humanities Fine Arts Gallery at UMM.

Members of the Morris Theatre Cooperative are in the process of rehabilitating the current historic Morris Theatre, consistent with its original architecture and décor as designed and built by B. J. Benfield in 1940. The new mural wraps around the front of the ticket counter in the theater lobby and reflects the colors and design of existing murals in the theater. The activity also gave Creative Study painting students an opportunity to work together on a project that would be visible in the Morris community.

Tina Didreckson, Morris Theatre manager, commented, "Customers and members have already noticed how the mural has given new life to our entrance ticket lobby. The brightness of the colors and the cheerfulness of the design help generate that happy feeling we want our patrons to experience in their visit to the Morris Theatre. I am really pleased that they were able to get it finished in time for our Prairie Pioneer Days' showing of the PlayRights' 'Son of the Guns' short film and 'Cat Ballou.' Hundreds of area people will be able to come see and enjoy it while it is fresh and new."

Students who collaborated on the mural include Darcey Aronson, Morris Area High School MaryKate Davini, Como Hi School (St. Paul) Maddie Gravning, Morris Area High School Tahni Jungst, Morris Area High School Lisa Manolis, Morris Area High School Amy Nelson, Edgewood Middle School (New Brighton) Hunter Peterson, ECHO Charter School (Belview) Dylan Pullis, Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools and Inga Reynolds, Powell Middle School (Littleton, Colo.).

The new theater mural was sponsored by the Henjum Creative Study Institute (CSI) through the University of Minnesota, Morris office of Continuing Education in partnership with the Morris Theatre Cooperative.

For more information about the UMM Henjum Creative Study Institute, contact Karen Cusey at (320) 589-6461 or visit the Web site at [Creative Study](#).

For more information about the Morris Theatre or to join the Morris Theatre Cooperative, contact Tina Didreckson at (320) 589-2200 or visit the Web site at [Morris Theatre](#).

Photo shows a portion of the mural.

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