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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MORRIS

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Morris, Minn. welcomes Tuna, Texas

Summary: Meiningens Student Theatre and the UMM theater discipline welcomes to Morris, Minnesota the hilarious shenanigans of Tuna, Texas, in the uproarious comedy “Greater Tuna.” UMM senior Todd A. Janssen directs this two-person comedic feast April 27-29.

(April 17, 2006)-Meiningens Student Theatre, in association with the University of Minnesota, Morris theater discipline, welcomes to Morris, Minnesota the hilarious shenanigans of Tuna, Texas in the uproarious comedy “Greater Tuna” by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard. UMM senior Todd A. Janssen (Hampton, Iowa) directs this two-person comedic feast April 27-29 in the Black Box Theatre, located in Humanities Fine Arts at UMM. Janssen affirms that the audience will recognize many of these characters from their own lives and will laugh at the huge, cartoony people they see on stage.

“Greater Tuna” showcases a typical day at Tuna, Texas’ very own radio station, OKKK. The two radio announcers who rule the roost are Thurston Wheelis and Arles Struvie, played by Tim Hellendrung (New Ulm) and Eric Aufderhar (North Branch), respectively. Hellendrung and Aufderhar take on numerous characters from around Tuna-town to give the audience the latest and greatest news from the area, from overheard gossip to hysterical advertisements to reported U.F.O. sightings! This uproarious comedy takes you on a roller coaster of laughs and proclaims time and time again: if you can find someplace you like better than Tuna, move!!

Meiningens Student Theatre gives students like Janssen the opportunity to produce, direct, design and act in their own theater productions. Janssen cited that directing his own show “has been a challenge because I always seem to want to try and do everything myself, but I have learned to delegate jobs, something which I have learned to like a lot.”

Hellendrung will also complete his senior theater project through his involvement in “Greater Tuna.” Students help to lead the way in other areas of this theater production as well. Assisting Janssen as assistant director/stage manager is Alexandra Bertolas (Virginia). Andy Brown Thomas (Minneapolis) is the assistant stage manager. Russ Haywood (Stillwater) designed sets for the show, while costumes were designed by Sara Herman (Vadnais Heights). Alex Clark (Woodbury) did double-duty for “Greater Tuna” and served as both lighting and sound designer. Prop master is Scott Bloom (Woodbury).

Come and visit the hilarious world of Tuna, Texas right here in Morris, Minnesota. Performances of “Greater Tuna” will be held Thursday through Saturday, April 27-29, at 7:30 p.m. with a special matinee performance on April 29 at 2 p.m., all in HFA Black Box Theatre. Free, convenient parking is available on the evenings and weekends in all UMM lots. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$4 for students and seniors. Discount rates are available for groups of 6 or more people. For further information and advance ticket sales, contact the Theatre Box Office at (320) 589-6249 or email inquiries to thrpub@morris.umn.edu.

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