

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

11-3-2015

Theatre Season Opens with The Normal Heart

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "Theatre Season Opens with The Normal Heart" (2015). *Campus News Archive*. 1635.

https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/1635

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Campus News, Newsletters, and Events at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MORRIS

Contact:

Melissa Vangsness, Director of Communications
Phone: [320-589-6414](tel:320-589-6414), weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: [320-589-6068](tel:320-589-6068), jrray@morris.umn.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Theatre Season Opens with *The Normal Heart*](#)

Summary: Directed by Professor of Theatre Arts Ray Schultz, the production runs November 12–14.

MORRIS, Minnesota (November 3, 2015)—The University of Minnesota, Morris Theatre Discipline opens its 2015–16 season with Larry Kramer’s *The Normal Heart*. Running November 12–14, this drama chronicles the role of political and social activism during the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s in New York City. It follows Kramer’s alter ego, writer and activist Ned Weeks, in his struggles to raise public awareness of the unidentified disease that seems to be specifically targeting gay men.

According to director and Professor of Theatre Arts Ray Schultz, *The Normal Heart* is “the kind of political drama that speaks to its historical moment, but also has resonance for contemporary times.” While recent victories have been won in the pursuit of marriage equality and medical advances have been made in the fight against AIDS, the show’s message remains timeless.

“We shouldn’t forget that AIDS is still a very real issue in many parts of the world, even among certain segments of the American public” says Schultz. “That’s one of the reasons I think the play deserves to be seen: so that a new generation, one that was not even born when the AIDS epidemic was at its height in America, can understand the epidemic’s history and the lessons to be drawn from it.”

Additional University faculty and staff assisting Schultz with the production include Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts Craig Moxon as scenic and lighting designer and Liz Spohr as costume designer. Also working behind the scenes are Justin Anderson ’18, Rochester, as stage manager; Silvio Defant ’15 Trento, Italy, as assistant director; Rhiannon Kunesh ’18, Onamia, as props designer; Matthew McDonough ’16, Saint Paul, as sound designer; Adam Molde ’16, Saint Cloud, as assistant lighting designer; Katie Rowles-Perich ’18, Duluth, as makeup designer; and Sandra Pratt ’16, Sisseton, South Dakota, as assistant costume designer.

The production features a 13-student cast led by William White ’16, Belgrade, as Kramer’s autobiographical hero, Ned Weeks. Eric Dymit ’17, Prior Lake, plays Ned’s lover, Felix Turner. Sydney Long ’16, Shoreview, plays Dr. Emma Brookner, a physician who enlists Ned in the fight against the outbreak. Brennan Basset ’17, Volga, South Dakota, plays Bruce Niles, a fellow activist, and Jonas Newhouse plays Ned’s brother Ben. Others in the cast include Mickey Capps ’18, Rogers, as Mickey Marcus; Jeremy Kuoeh ’18, Bloomington, as Tommy Boatwright; Sam Ternes ’19, Gonvick, as Craig Donner; Mitch Finzel ’17, Morris, as David; Shane McKinley ’19, Buffalo, as Hiram Keebler; Austin Watson ’18, Willmar, as Grady; Rowles-Perich as an examining doctor; and Kunesh as a hospital orderly.

The Normal Heart will be performed nightly November 12–14 in the Humanities Fine Arts Raymond J. Lammers Proscenium Theatre at 7:30 p.m., with an additional 2 p.m. matinee on Saturday. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$7 for senior citizens, and \$5 for students. Free parking is available in all campus lots. Tickets and more information are available at [320-589-6077](tel:320-589-6077) or at tickets.umn.edu.

[View this story electronically.](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.

###