ISU Theatre Opens Season with Classic Drama

AMES, Iowa – ISU Theatre opens its 2011-2012 season with the classic nineteenth century drama, *Hedda Gabler*.

The story revolves around one of dramatic literature’s most iconic and infamous characters, Hedda Gabler, who struggles to maintain her fiercely independent spirit in the face of nineteenth century society’s rigid expectations. She yearns for a life filled with passion and meaning, but lacks the courage to do what is necessary to break free and risk scandal.

“Like all great plays, *Hedda Gabler* presents universal questions about what it means to be a human,” said director Brad Dell, Assistant Professor of Theatre. Dell believes modern day audiences will relate to the play. “The characters in this play are all trying to make a positive life for themselves. They are striving to make a home and create a meaningful existence. The tragedy comes because Hedda just can’t find a way to fit in.”

*Hedda Gabler* was written in 1890 by Norwegian playwright Henrick Ibsen. Ibsen is credited as one of the leading playwrights to usher in the modern era of Realism in drama. Like Ibsen’s other great work *A Doll’s House*, *Hedda Gabler* is considered a trailblazing work of feminist theatre.

“This is a truly thrilling play to breathe life into,” Dell said. “Every rehearsal is full of discovery because these characters are phenomenally rich, and the story is so compelling. I think it really hits home for all of us because we have all experienced times in our lives when we have felt out of place and unable to make sense of the world. *Hedda Gabler* is a wonderfully complex and dramatic exploration of that struggle.”

Madison Welterlen, senior in performing arts and music plays the title character. Hedda finds herself caught between three men: the charming but manipulative Judge Brack (played by Jeff White, senior in performing arts), her endearing, bumbling husband, George Tesman (played by Matt Meldrem, senior in performing arts), and her passionate but dangerous former love, Eilert Loevborg, (played by Josh Ster, senior in performing arts.) The cast also includes Kiersten Naberhaus, junior in performing arts and English, as Thea Elvstead, Victoria Stafford, senior in performing arts, as Aunt Juliana, and Teresa Blader, sophomore in Animal Science, as Bertha.

*Hedda Gabler* will be performed at Fisher Theater Sept. 30, Oct 1, 7, 8 at 7:30 pm; Oct. 2 at 1:00 pm and Oct. 9 at 2:00 pm. Tickets are $16 for adults, $14 for seniors and $8 for students. Tickets can be purchased through TicketMaster by calling 1-800-745-3000 or online, at the Stephens Box Office in Ames weekdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or at the door before the performance. For more information, visit the ISU Theatre website: www.theatre.iastate.edu.
HOME TOWN INFORMATION

Hedda - Madison Welterlen, Boone, senior in Music and Performing Arts
Judge Brack - Jeff White, Mount Vernon, senior in Performing Arts
Eilert Loevborg - Josh Ster, Marion, senior in Performing Arts
George Tesman - Matt Meldrem, Grinnell, senior in Performing Arts
Aunt Juliana Tesman - Vicky Stafford, Elkhart, senior in Performing Arts and Marketing
Thea Elvsted - Kiersten Simmons, Linden, junior in Performing Arts and English
Bertha - Teresa Blader, Wautoma, Wisconsin; sophomore in Animal Science

Stage Manager - Liz Rankin, Bedford, junior in Performing Arts

Publicity photos are available upon request.