ISU Theatre’s “Six Characters” Receives Top National Honors from the Kennedy Center

AMES, Iowa – The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) recognized ISU Theatre’s production, Six Characters, as the top college/university play in the nation for 2011 by awarding it with seven of the organization’s highest commendations, including “Outstanding Production of a Play”. In addition, lecturer in theatre Matt Foss was awarded “Outstanding Director of a Play”, and senior in performing arts Matt Meldrem was awarded “Outstanding Lighting Designer”.

Three of the show’s performers (seniors in performing arts Madison Welterlen and Jeff White and junior in performing arts Brittny Rebhuhn) were honored with awards for “Distinguished Performance.” And the entire company (including director, actors, designers, and technicians) was honored for “Distinguished Performance and Production Ensemble.”

The awards were chosen by a national selection panel from work showcased at the eight regional festivals held in January and February throughout the country. Six Characters was originally performed in March 2011 at Fisher Theater as a part of ISU Theatre’s 2010-2011 mainstage season. The KCACTF Region V selection committee invited the production to perform at the regional festival held in January at ISU where it was viewed by the festival attendees as well as the national selection panel.

David Lee Painter, KCACTF National Vice Chair from the University of Idaho and a member of the national awards panel said, “I savor Iowa State University's production of Six Characters as a treasured memory. The creative team's labor of love LEAPT off the stage and into my heart. The production remains with me as an example of the power of theatre to change lives and inspire us to be better - it was an afternoon that I will never, ever forget.”

In previous years the top productions from the regional festivals were invited to be fully performed at the Kennedy Center’s National Festival in Washington D.C. Instead, this year KCACTF decided to create an awards system and invite individual honorees to attend the national festival. Both Matt Foss and Matt Meldrem will represent ISU at the national festival in April and be recognized for their outstanding work on Six Characters.

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