

NEWS RELEASE

September 27, 2005

Contact: Bryan Schrepel 913-758-6165

E-mail: SchrepelB@stmary.edu



American Theatre Classic Opens 2005 USM Theatre Season

7:30 p.m. Oct. 6-8, 2005

(Leavenworth, Kan.)—The University of Saint Mary recently renovated the entire Xavier Theatre, including a re-built stage, new seating with a new curtain and fly-lines to come. The theatre is now completely handicap-accessible. The university's theatre department will not wait long to put the new renovations to work, as it opens the 2005 USM Theatre Season with Rodgers & Hammerstein's American classic, *Carousel*.

The curtain rises on *Carousel* at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 6-8. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for non-USM students with a valid ID. All students with a valid USM ID are free. Call 913-758-6152 for more information.

Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Carousel* tells a story of tragedy and hope that two lovers and their friends must endure in a small east coast town. Set in a fishing town on the coast of New England, *Carousel* opens in an amusement park at the heart of which is a grand carousel. Billy Bigelow, a handsome man with a violent temper, is the barker of this carousel. By the carousel, he meets and immediately falls for the lovely but shy Julie Jordan. Their ill-fated love is played out throughout the production.

To assist the elaborate scene construction, several members of the Leavenworth/Lansing community donated items, including a few carousel pieces from the C.W. Parker Carousel Museum.

"The community support for this project has been great," Fine Arts—Theatre Chair Van Ibsen said. "With the support we've received, coupled with all the hard work we've put into this project, we should put a good show together for everyone."

Carousel was also the first musical created by Rodgers & Hammerstein. It ushered in an entire new genre in American theatre, the musical play, representing a unique fusion of Rodgers' musical comedy and Hammerstein's operetta. A milestone in the development of the American musical, it also marked the beginning of the most successful partnership in Broadway musical history and was followed by many others.

The newly renovated Xavier Theatre is located on the south-east side of the University of Saint Mary Campus, 4100 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, Kan. Call 913-758-6152 for ticket information, additional show information or for the complete 2005-06 theatre schedule.

###