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Press Release

Never the Sinner ACTF Tour

The company of UWSP's Department of Theatre & Dance production of *Never the Sinner* spent an exhilarating and exhausting week at the American College Theatre Festival in Saginaw, MI January 5 – 11. The students saw numerous productions, participated in workshops, competed in acting and design events and mounted two performances of *Never the Sinner* both of which received standing ovations.

In a first for a UWSP student, Mercer Aplin won the Kennedy Center ACTF award for Sound Design Excellence earning a chance to compete in the ACTF National Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. this April. David LaRose was named a winner of the Society of Properties Artists and Managers Outstanding Achievement in Properties Design. Andy Broomell earned a Region III Judges Award for Outstanding Media Design. Thomas Bevan and James Roland participated in the Irene Ryan acting competition with Thomas advancing as far as the semi-final round.

In preparation for the tour the company spent the New Year's week in rehearsal. The production was originally mounted in the UWSP Noel Fine Arts Center Studio Theatre where the stark white set was positioned in one corner of the room with audience located on two sides in a thrust style arrangement. The theatre in which *Never the Sinner* was to be performed at the festival was a proscenium theatre similar to Jenkins Theatre on the UWSP campus. To make the changes necessary to the staging and design elements, the company remounted the production in Jenkins Theatre altering it to work in a theatre with the audience located in a proscenium configuration. They also rehearsed the unloading, set-up and load-out of all of the technical elements to adhere to the strict four hour time limit required at the festival.

The Department of Theatre & Dance has been informed that two productions from the regional festival (Purdue's *The Seagull* and Western Illinois' *Dearborn Americana*) remain under consideration for inclusion at the national festival. It's worth noting that both productions featured faculty and graduate students in their casts and design teams. UWSP's *Never the Sinner* was performed and designed exclusively by undergraduate students.

The company consisted of

Director: Stephen T. Smith

Cast: Thomas Bevan, Peter Hargarten, Eric Harper, James Roland, Alex Sabin, Meagan Wells, Zack Woods

Designers: Mercer Aplin (sound), Andy Broomell (media), Cliff Hannon (set), David LaRose (props), Christopher Pheiffer (lighting), Elizabeth Stadstad (costumes)

Managers: Anna Dombrowski, Scott Frost, Ken Keith

Crew: Nathan Freberg, Christopher Walls.