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IWU's McPherson Theatre Presents New Musical, *Urinetown*

September 20, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Theatre Arts will present a comedic look at a world without washrooms in this fall's mainstage musical, *Urinetown*, by Greg Kotis (book and lyrics) and Mark Hollman (music), which will run in IWU's McPherson Theatre (2 Ames Plaza East, Bloomington) from Tuesday, Oct. 4, to Sunday, Oct. 9.

Illinois Wesleyan is one of the first venues nationwide to perform this new Tony Award-winning show, which is said to have redefined the modern musical comedy while parodying traditional musicals such as *Les Misérables*, *West Side Story* and *The Music Man*.

Tom Ossowski, assistant professor of theatre arts, will direct a 25-member ensemble of students as they portray the citizens of a city called Urinetown. There is a clear divide between the Urinetown elite, who are always ostentatiously dressed, and the poor, who use stilts, inline skates and other unusual accessories. However, townspeople of every class are suffering the effects of two decades of drought.

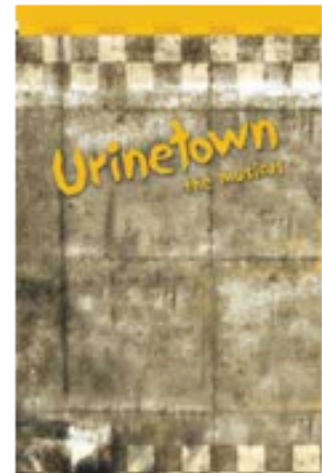
In an attempt to conserve water, the government has placed a ban on the use of private toilet facilities. As a result, the townspeople are exploited by the Urine Good Company, a local corporation that profits by charging an admission fee for the only public restroom in Urinetown. When a hero finally speaks out against the injustice of the toilet syndicate, a citywide revolution begins.

Influenced by the theories of playwright Bertolt Brecht and composer Kurt Weill, who collaborated in the 1920s and developed the concept of theatre as an ideological and social forum, *Urinetown* uses witty humor and bizarre perspective to explore the issue of the government's control of individual freedoms.

Other shows scheduled for the 2005-06 McPherson Theatre season include Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (Nov. 8-13), Wilder's *Skin of Our Teeth* (March 7-12) and Illinois Wesleyan's 2006 dance concert (April 11-15).

Tickets for *Urinetown*, which go on sale Sept. 26, are \$8 for the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 8 p.m. performances as well as for Sunday's 2 p.m. matinee. Tickets for Friday at 8 p.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. or 8 p.m. cost \$10. Senior citizens (aged 65 and over) receive a \$1.00 discount and tickets for students with a valid ID are \$1 for all shows.

To reserve tickets in advance, call the McPherson Theatre box office at (309) 556-3232.



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