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## NYC Scenic Designer Creates Set for IWU Production

Anna Deters  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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April 10, 2003

**CONTACT:** Anna Deters, 309/556-3181

## NYC Scenic Designer Creates Set for IWU Production

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The Illinois Wesleyan School of Theatre Arts will present *Misalliance*, a comedy of manners by George Bernard Shaw, beginning on Tuesday, April 15. Set on an Edwardian country estate, the play is about a successful merchant and his family, his daughter's fiancée, the fiancée's aristocratic father, an airplane pilot, and a Polish female acrobat.

The show will run each day through Saturday, April 19. All performances will be at 8 p.m. in McPherson Theatre, 2 Ames Plaza East, Bloomington.

The Illinois Wesleyan production will feature the set design of New York City scenic and lighting designer Josh Epstein, who has designed theatre and opera productions Off-Broadway with companies such as Naked Angels, Rattlestick Theatre, Target Margin, La Mama, ETC, and The Juilliard School of Drama.

Epstein was also the associate designer on Tony Kushner's New York directorial debut at the Public Theater last year. His regional work includes productions at the Berkshire Opera, The Leland Center in Boston, The Trollwood Performing Arts School and Bard College, as well as a number of shows with the Greasy Joan Theater Company in Chicago.

Epstein, who attended the University of Chicago as a political science major, cultivated his interest in design while working as set designer for the student-run theatre. Increasingly encouraged, he moved to New York City and pursued his master in fine arts in design at New York University.

For the set of *Misalliance*, Epstein wants to emphasize the contextual Edwardian aspect of the play while maintaining a sense of theatrical meaning. "The whole set is going to be white," said Epstein. "It's somewhat abstract, but the architecture and some of the details are very realistic." *Misalliance*, he said, "is a very talky play," and one of his main goals for the set design is to "create a space that's exciting for the actors to move around in, and exciting for the audience to watch without overshadowing the conversation and the ideas."

"What I like about set design," said Epstein, "is that you take the architectural elements you find in research and then tweak it to make it a little more theatrical. These elements really exist, and you have to make them work for the space."

Epstein has also worked extensively as a designer for dance, lighting world premieres at The Joyce Soho, The Merce Cunningham Studios, The Harkness Dance Project and

Danspace/St. Marks. For the past three years he was the resident dance lighting supervisor for Symphony Space, NYC.

For more information about *Misalliance* or Josh Epstein, contact Danielle Drogos, publicity coordinator for the IWU School of Theatre Arts, at 309/556-3442.

### **Ticket Information**

Individual tickets for Tuesday-Thursday performances are \$6 for adults and \$5 for seniors, and \$8 for adults and \$7 for seniors on Friday and Saturday. Tickets are \$1 for students with an IWU or ISU ID. Tickets may be reserved a week in advance by calling the McPherson Theatre box office at 309/556-3232, and may also be purchased at the door.