

"Raisin In The Sun" Opens Here Friday



E. Glendon Gabbard

The Players of Eastern Illinois University, under the direction of Dr. E. Glendon Gabbard, professor of speech, will present the formal opening night of "A Raisin in the Sun" at 8 p. m., Friday, in the Fine Arts Theatre.

The play will also be given Saturday, Monday and Tuesday nights, Feb. 2, 4, and 5.

Written by Lorraine Hansberry, the drama is concerned with the everyday trifles and tragedies of a poor Negro family.

Members of the cast are Thomas Walker, Mavis; Jannie Glenor, Ruth; Leroy Blackful, Walter; LaVelle McKinnie, Beneatha; Beverly La Caste, Lena; Ben Ward, Bobo; James Lynch and Lewis Dillard, moving men, and James Wilhelm, Linder.

Visiting debate teams on campus for the 26th annual EIU debate tournament will be guests of the speech department for the opening night of the production.

'Inexperienced' Cast Presents 'Enjoyable,' Above-Average Play

By Bill Campbell

"One must learn by doing," said the ancient Greek dramatist Sophocles.

This is the advice that might be offered to an inexperienced group of Eastern's Players after the opening-night performance of Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" Friday in the Fine Arts Theatre.

Although their lack of experience was extremely noticeable, the members of the cast gave a more than satisfactory presentation which improved as the evening progressed.

Suffering from a talky first act in which the lines were spoken like groans from a gramophone gone wild, the play was shaky until the second scene of the second act when the cast spoke more slowly and improved its enunciation.

Probably the the most effectively handled aspect of the drama was its humor. The amusing lines were well-memorized and done in a spirited manner. Unfortunately, the more serious moments of the play were less convincing and showed badly the inexperience of

the cast.

As far as noteworthy performances are concerned, this critic must give credit to Leroy Blackful, who gave a vigorous performance as Walter Younger, and LaVelle McKinnie, who accurately portrayed the irreverent, outspoken Beneatha Younger.

The best scene is in the second act when Walter and Beneatha romp around and on the kitchen table in a dance that looks as though it combines the best efforts of Haitian voodoo men and Watusi witch doctors.

In the area of scene design, everything was well-suited to the play, save for the "sky" seen through the window of the Younger apartment. During the "day-time" this chunk of the heavens looked like the dull purple glow from a sulphur vapor lamp. In the "late afternoon" it was an inky royal blue, much like a view into a quart bottle of Quink. For the one night time scene the window was mercifully shaded.

On the whole, however, "A Raisin in the Sun" was enjoyable and had a cast with definite acting potential.