Paule designs ‘Lark’ production set

By Terri Castles
Nancy Paule, set designer for “The Lark” is one of the few students to design a set for a major production offered by Eastern’s Theatre Arts Department.

Paule, a senior theatre arts major from Belleville, designed the set for Jean Anouilh’s drama “The Lark” directed by Gerald Sullivan.

“The Lark” a story of the life of Joan of Arc, opens Friday at 8 p.m. at the Fine Arts Building.

Paule, who has been working on the design since Christmas, said her first step in designing was to obtain a copy of the script. She later presented her drawing of the design to the director who has full authority to change it.

The few changes Sullivan made in her design were to make the set easier for the actors to work with, Paule said.

The set is made from wooden platforms painted grey. But instead of mixing only black and white together for the gray, a blue paint was added to give the set a cold effect for the play.

A special lighting called the “stage glass effect” is also being used by Paule to produce the right atmosphere for the coronation scene.

Paule’s favorite part of the set is a combination throne and altar. Turned one way, the massive block becomes the throne for the small king whose kingdom was as overpowering as the prop.

Upside down, the object becomes an altar for Joan’s coronation scene.

Paule said that designing the set this way saved time and the expense of building an extra piece for the set. It has taken three weeks to build the set, with the aid of other theatre instructors and students.

Clarence Blanchette, instructor of scene design and regular set designer for major productions, said he chose Paule as set designer because she was “so exceptional.”

Blanchette said he feels a student should get a “well-rounded” education. Students need more knowledge and experience in all aspects of the theatre, he added.