



school of fine arts *eastern illinois university*

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DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

October 1, 1975

Two of the best-known nobodies in stage history are the subject of the multi-award-winning comedy, "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead," that will be presented at the Eastern Illinois University Theatre October 10,11,12,13, and 17,18, and 19, 1975. They are the old school chums of Shakespeare's Hamlet, who are indistinguishable minor figures in the Bard's classic but are the leading characters in this new re-interpretation by the young British playwright Tom Stoppard that was a triumphant hit in New York and London in 1967 and 1968.

Jim Davis and Kevin T. Kelly will portray these immortal stooges who are mysteriously called to Elsinore to jolly up the prince and get his mind off his father's murder. But they are confused by all that happens around them, standing on the fringe of events they don't understand. They are especially rattled by some of the strange remarks Hamlet makes to them. When he informs them that he can "tell a hawk from a handsaw," one of them complains to the other that this sort of thing keeps them "intrigued without ever quite being enlightened."

The melodramatic happenings of Shakespeare's play weave wildly in and out of their apprehension and eventually overwhelm them completely. Accompanying them a good bit of the way are the be-draggled strolling players they first encounter on their way to Elsinore -- the players who later are to "catch the conscience of the King." Stephen D. Griffin will be seen as the Mephistophelian leader of the troupe who is exempt from danger because he knows enough to view any potential horror as just another piece of theatre. Eddie Eldred, Frank Calo, Michael Drake, James E. Evans, John Hightower and Lafayette Wilson will be others in his troupe.

The prince whose attitudes Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are to spy out will be played by Jeff Eaton, the King and Queen who exhort the two bewildered courtiers to this task will be played by Scott Stanley and Karen Eubanks. Others in the cast will be William Jack Pierson and Cindi Switzer, and Marge Rapp and Katie Sullivan as the Ladies-in-Waiting to Gertrude.

E.G. Gabbard is directing "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" for the University Theatre with settings or environs by C.P. Blanchette. The Elizabethan finery of the Danish court and the tatters of the strolling players are being created by costume designer Cindy Russell.

Tickets will be available at the Fine Arts Ticket Office beginning Monday, October 6 from 1-5 p.m. daily.