

A new play to debut by Reid Jensen

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A NEW PLAY BY REID JENSEN TO DEBUT AT THE MANDELL WEISS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, FEB. 3-7

Imagine a small, wind-whipped island off the Carolina coast where a powerful secret weapon has been developed by private enterprise. Imagine the fate of the weapon, as the inhabitants and developers struggle for power in "Dickson: Old News from the New War," a new play by Reid Jensen, to be staged Feb. 3-7, in the Mandell Weiss Center for the Performing Arts, at the University of California, San Diego. All performances are at 8 p.m. except for a 7 p.m. Sunday curtain.

In this provocative and pertinent satire of life in the 20th century, the characters struggle for power and control of the secret weapon, reducing the conflict between the world's two superpowers to a common ground: the town of Dickson.

Jensen says, "Take a good look at the world and you'll see one faction vehemently protesting against armed aggression, another group extolling the virtues of the latest MX missile, and yet another which shrinks from dealing with the problems--the disavowed and disenchanting. All of these people inhabit Dickson. All of them come together and break apart in the course of the play."

"Dickson: Old News from a New War" is Jensen's graduate thesis for his Master of Fine Arts degree in the play writing program, UCSD Department of Theatre.

Jensen's motivation for writing the play stems from his fascination with man's obsession with power and the seductive, masculine world of warfare that continues to proliferate in our time: "As an artist I sometimes wonder if my writing this play about these issues is the most effective way to advocate a change in man's attitude about how we are in this world. Our thinking is so confused about how we feel about armed aggression. Perhaps 'Dickson' will offer audiences a new outlook on the issues we face."

The cast of characters is drawn from members of the theatre department's graduate program, as are the director and designers. They are: Donald Mackay as Stan Dickson; Monica Buckley as Sandy Cates; Craig Green plays Jay Knifefield; Karen Vesper as Loretta LaFord; Molly Powell plays Penelope Barlow; Deryl Caitlyn portrays Joe Barlow; Thomas Nelis as Puckett; Maggie Stewart plays Mary Delano and Ivan G'Vera portrays Dr. Elliot Fandare.

The director is Ralph Janes and the dramaturge is Mary Ireton. John Murphy and Brenda Berry designed the set and lighting, respectively. V. Nadja Brost designed the costumes. Cherie Miltenberger is stage manager.

Tickets for the performances are \$9 for general admission, \$5 for students, and \$8 for seniors and military on Wednesday and Thursday night performances, and are available at the Mandell Weiss Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Office (534-4574), from the ARTS TIX booth at the Spreckels Theatre and from TicketMaster outlets.

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