

Meet The New Little Theater Director...

# He's Happily Addicted To The Stage

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By Mary Kindland

The imposing physical structure of Little Theater of Jamestown has been further enhanced by the addition of a full time director and set designer who admittedly is hopelessly and happily addicted to the theater.

Since his arrival here a scant two months ago, Gil F. "Gibby" Brand has been basking in the friendly warmth of theatrical patrons and reveling in LT headquarters which he describes as "probably the most functional theater I have ever seen."

The congenial director, a native of the Boston, Mass. area, cites the building itself as having just the right touch and the good fortune of having been built at a time when craftsmen knew what they were doing. The compliment carries added weight in light of Brand's personal affiliation with the Charlotte, N.C. Summer Theater and three summer sessions at Martha's Vineyard, Mass.

where he handled all phases of productions.

Brand, a dark-haired bachelor, undercores an aim for professionalism as a prime objective of his directorship in Jamestown. He refers to backstage talk that audiences here are New York comedy oriented, and points to a possible switch in this area by introducing some fine old Shaw comedies; a nonsense play; a classical drama; a musical; and a few surprises.

Brand hinted he is interested in producing "Man from LaMancha" when it is released May 15 for amateur groups.

Variety in play selection, he stated, is in the best interests of the performers and the director.

The ultra-modern plant's trapped stage and other building assets will be utilized to the fullest by Brand whose fertile mind is geared to utilize all phases of the theater to get the most out of the operation in Jamestown.

"The Impossible Years," is Brand's first directing effort with the local thespians, and elimination of the familiar prompters from the wings was the first major change he initiated.

Admittedly surprised at a "poor" turnout for auditions for his first play, Brands says he intends to generate excitement for the theater in order to draw more people into the total picture. Recalling his success in presenting "The Killing of Sister George," at an all girls' school, he will probably make good on the promise.

Brand, who lives on Woodlawn Drive at the upper end of the lake by Mayville, has already cut a neat path into his basic jobs of getting deeply involved and getting used to the system here. He applauds the seasonal ticket system of L.T. saying he is delighted not to be drawn away from a production to push tickets. He also likes the idea of an almost guaranteed audience for the plays.

In his one-step-at-a-time schedule, Brand is anticipating meeting many new friends when the annual membership campaign gets under way Oct. 29.

The cherubic-faced director will take time off from his work in December when he joins a two-week stage tour in London, England. His first trip abroad. The jaunt will find Brand spending Christmas in London.

Another first for the young director will be winter in the snow belt, a prospect he faces with mixed emotions.

When not building sets, coordinating crews, pushing membership, casting and directing productions, Brand will return, at least in spirit, to his first love...acting.

In his words, "I look forward someday to performing in legitimate theater in New York City where I may starve for five years and then give up, or get a bank roll first, then go to New York, not starve for five years and then give up...in style."



Gil F. Brand  
...new director  
of Little Theater