1973


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THOMAS WOOD STEVENS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN
ART THEATRE WITH EMPHASIS ON THE KENNETH
SAWYER GOODMAN MEMORIAL THEATRE, 1922-1930.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural
and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1973
Speech-Theater

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THOMAS WOOD STEVENS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN ART THEATRE WITH EMPHASIS ON THE KENNETH SAWYER GOODMAN MEMORIAL THEATRE, 1922-1930

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The Department of Speech

by

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The writer acknowledges her family's continued moral support, without which this study could never have been completed.
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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to describe and evaluate the work and writings of Thomas Wood Stevens (1880-1942) as those efforts contributed to the art theatre movement in America. Previous studies emphasized Stevens' achievements with the first theatre department in an American university, Carnegie Institute of Technology, and the commercial venture of the Globe Theatre but did not encompass his art theatre activities. This work completes another segment of the theatrical career of Stevens.

The investigation focuses on Stevens' particular contributions to American art theatre as exemplified in his work at the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre, 1922-1930, and adhered to in his years at the University of Michigan, Stanford University, University of Iowa, and the University of Arizona.

As background the first chapter gives a biography of Stevens related to the contemporary theatre of his time, discusses the circuitous route which led Stevens to declare the theatre his vocation, and defines his views of art theatre. The next three chapters center on the development and administration of the Goodman Memorial Theatre: designing the structure and policies of that theatre; direction of the Goodman
Reperitory Company, the Studio Group, and the theatre school of the Chicago Art Institute; resignation of Stevens as director and the death of the Goodman repertory art theatre. The concluding chapter summarizes Stevens' work in educational institutions, national organizations, little theatres, and community theatres after his departure from the Goodman.

Stevens represented the period of the total artist, and he dedicated his career to promoting artistic standards in the theatre. The Goodman Theatre was the capstone of Stevens' ideal art theatre. It was an endowed theatre. It combined a repertory company of talented and skilled artisans with a stringent educational training ground not only for the artist, a theatre in which the audience could experience varied, artistic productions, and a theatre that could experiment and educate.

When the Goodman venture failed Stevens continued to devote his energies to the theatre. His letters, articles, brochures, lecture programs, addresses, outlines, pageants, contracts, published interviews, books, and lecture notes voiced his firm but unswerving concepts of theatre. His years of teaching at Michigan, Stanford, Iowa, and Arizona showed no betrayal of his beliefs nor compromise of his ideals. His efforts in promoting theatre organizations and in training skilled theatrical artists was constant.
Thomas Wood Stevens, author of *The Theatre from Athens to Broadway*, director, educator, and artist, pioneered not only in educational theatre but American art theatre. The value of his contributions to the American theatre is noted by students, colleagues, and critics; the effects of his work appear in areas of theatrical activities where theory and concept find expression in practical but artistic productions.
INTRODUCTION

Thomas Wood Stevens' reputation as a leader in the development of twentieth-century American theatre rests primarily on his achievements as an innovator. When the Carnegie Institute of Technology School of Drama opened in 1914 under his direction, no other theatre associated with a university existed. The framework of a theatre department in the fall of 1914 had no precedent. Stevens formulated the curricula, established policies, and organized a theatre department that offered a four year degree.

Although most people in the theatre know Thomas Wood Stevens as the founder of the School of Drama at Carnegie Tech, they are less cognizant of his other valuable contributions to the field of theatre and related arts. A man of many talents and endless energies, Stevens was a printer, engraver, etcher, poet, playwright, pageanteer, artist, lecturer, essayist, director, critic, editor, and teacher. During his lifetime he published The Blue Sky, wrote and engraved for the Santa Fe Railroad, produced many etchings, and headed the Etchers' Society of America. He produced over 190 poems, 24 scenarios, 63 pageants and masques, and two textbooks, Lettering and The Theatre From Athens to Broadway, "an important literary contribution . . . which
expresses the author's theory of the theatre and emphasizes its practical workings." In addition to the previously cited publications, historical novels, essays, addresses, and stories bring his total number of published works to 403.

As a lecturer he not only spoke to his university classes but traveled extensively throughout the United States giving of his time to organizations, schools, communities, and conferences, expounding his beliefs about and experiences in the theatre and the related arts of painting, architecture, and pageantry.

Stevens' teaching career included positions at the Chicago Art Institute and the University of Wisconsin, where he taught lettering, art history, and mural painting, Carnegie Institute of Technology, University of Iowa, University of Michigan, Stanford University, and the University of Arizona.

As a man of the theatre Stevens directed literally hundreds of plays and was associated with numerous theatrical organizations--The Chicago Civic Theatre, Drama League, Wisconsin Dramatic Society,


2List of Poems, Stories, Articles, Pageants, Masques, Speeches, Lectures, Thomas Wood Stevens Collection of Manuscript and Printed Material Pertaining to His Activities in the American Theatre, List compiled by Mrs. T. W. Stevens; not a separate volume, Special Collections, Library, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

In 1924 Stevens left Carnegie Tech and accepted the directorship of the newly formed Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre in Chicago. William O. Goodman, principal financial patron of the new theatre, stipulated the choice of Stevens because of his early theatrical association with Goodman's deceased son, Kenneth Sawyer.

Stevens accepted the new position assured that the Goodman Theatre would be the crystallization of his ideals of an art theatre. At the end of five years, however, Stevens resigned because of fundamental differences that arose between him and the Board of Trustees of the Chicago Art Institute with which the Goodman Theatre was affiliated.

His resignation from Goodman enhanced his prestige and extended his influence to other art and educational theatre activities.

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From 1930 until his death in 1942 Stevens freelanced, originated the Globe Theatre Company, worked with the Federal Theatre Project, and taught in four universities. In the fall of 1941 Stevens accepted the position of head of the theatre department at the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, where he died on January 29, 1942.

The purpose of this study is to examine Stevens' particular practices and contributions to the American art theatre movement. Centering on his years as director of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre, 1922-1930, this investigation details the policies, goals, and productions of the Goodman Theatre as they exemplify Stevens' art theatre tenets. The remainder of the study presents a profile of his educational theatre endeavors as those works echo his achievements at the Goodman.

Previous studies and one study in progress concentrate on Stevens' work at Carnegie Tech and with the Globe Theatre Company. A thesis by Molly Knight entitled "The Theatre Work of Thomas Wood Stevens at the Carnegie Institute of Technology As Seen in His Letters and Manuscripts," 1949, University of Arizona, examines the developmental years and the accomplishments of the first theatre department in an American university. Her well-documented study presents Stevens' achievements in educational theatre but does not examine his unique art theatre practices.
Another study in progress is being prepared by Mr. George Schwimmer of Leixlip House Lodge, Leixlip, County Kildare, Ireland, for Tulane University. According to Miss Phyllis Ball, Head of Manuscripts, Special Collections, Library, University of Arizona, and the person responsible for arranging the Thomas Wood Stevens Collection in collaboration with Mrs. T. W. (Helen) Stevens, the Schwimmer study will concentrate on the technical aspects of the Carnegie Tech program and will complement Knight's study.


Another work listed as "Stevens, T. W. Shakespeare, Wm. King Lear Production by Globe Theatre, Century of Progress, Chicago," has not been found.

These studies are investigations devoted solely to the theatre work of Thomas Wood Stevens. Two other dissertations, Bernard Frank Dukore's, "Maurice Browne and The Chicago Little Theatre," 1957, University of Illinois, and Goni Michaeloff's "William Poel: His Theatre Work and Lectures in the United States in 1916," unpublished dissertation, 1967, Louisiana State University, afford supplementary source material, while articles in journals and newspapers are less specific about Stevens' art theatre career.
Although the studies of Knight and Feldman are historical examinations of Stevens' work in the theatre, they do not encompass the province of this study. The particular contribution of this study is its investigation of Steven's successes and failures as he directed the Goodman Art Theatre. This work seeks to describe Stevens' specific contributions to the art theatre movement in the United States as exemplified at the Goodman Theatre.

Source material for this investigation has come, in the main, from the Thomas Wood Stevens Collection at the University of Arizona. Seventy volumes of material contain Stevens' personal and professional correspondence, contracts, photographs, newspaper clippings, programs, brochures, manuscript and published works, catalogues, announcements, blue-prints, financial reports, prompt books, pageants, paintings, diary, calendar, records, and other memorabilia. Also housed in the University of Arizona library are the letters of Mrs. T. W. Stevens and the personal books and library of Stevens, with marginal notations.

A source of general information was the Thomas Wood Stevens, A Memorial Issue, Educational Theatre Journal, December, 1951, edited by Melvin R. White. This particular issue offers a series of articles dedicated to Stevens and written by friends and colleagues. Interviews with Peter Marroney, Chairman of the
Department of Theatre, University of Arizona, and Phyllis Ball provided both professional and personal data.

Arranged chronologically, this study investigates Stevens' early associations with the theatre, his work at the Goodman, and his final educational theatre activities. Chapter I outlines Stevens' early years; Chapter II notes his role in the organization of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre; Chapter III describes the first three years of the Goodman; Chapter IV examines Stevens' final accomplishments and resignation from Goodman; Chapter V details Stevens' work after Goodman. The conclusion summarizes Stevens' special contributions to the American art theatre movement. Specifically, this study outlines Stevens' theatrical ideals as evidenced by his work from 1922-1942 with emphasis on the years 1922-1930.

A man of catholic interests in the arts and scholarly pursuits, Stevens came to the theatre by a circuitous and unorthodox route. From his earliest associations with the theatre, Stevens formulated certain concepts and beliefs which found fruition and satisfaction in his brief period at the Goodman Theatre. Never content to accept the theatre as a static institution, Stevens desired in addition to the established commercial stage an experimental art theatre. He wanted a theatre that presented classical as well as experimental productions. He viewed the theatre as an experience of
universals rather than a social tool. He thought of the theatre as a
product and creation of artists, not dilletantes, which should be
available to any and all audiences.
CHAPTER I

STEVENS' THEATRICAL ACTIVITIES TO 1922

Thomas Wood Stevens was born January 26, 1880, in Daysville, Illinois, "in a little room with all the vines on it." He attended a country school at the age of seven, and "at about 8 learned to swim in Kyte Creek, near Rock River." Along with this formal and informal education his mother read to him from the Iliad, Odyssey, and Roman history, while his sister, Lonne, eighteen years his senior, plied him with Shakespeare.

At about the age of twelve, Stevens "passed the County exams" and about 1893 was sent to the Armour Academy in Chicago. Apparently Thomas Wood and his sister went to Chicago without their

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4 Calendar entry, 1880, Volume 46, Stevens Collection. Hereafter, the references to the Calendar will be noted simply, Calendar. This indication of Stevens' early sensitivity to natural things was repeated in his son, Alden. At an early age in Chicago young Alden informed his mother, Helen Bradshaw Stevens, that the flowers "... talk to me. They tell me that they love me." As he patted the grass he noted that it was glad to see him. Newspaper clipping, Sunday Record-Herald, Chicago, September 4, 1910. Stevens Collection.

5 Calendar entry, 1887.

6 Calendar entry, 1893.

7 Ibid.
parents, for the two of them at first lived with an aunt, "Mrs. Byron Callendar, on Grand Avenue . . . and later with the Garnseys on Oakwood Blvd." Stevens next enrolled in the Armour Institute pursuing a course in mechanical engineering because a "Mr. Fry said if he would go there to school, there'd be a job for him when he graduated." Stevens acquired a tuition job at the Institute. His work, putting books away in the library, lasted briefly, however, because "he always read the book before putting it up." This early love of books may have cost him his first job, but his association with the Institute earned him a friend, Professor Norman Conant Roney, "who encouraged the interest in reading and writing poetry, and plays." Young Stevens extended his literary interests while enrolled at Armour Institute by studying at the Chicago Art Institute on

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8Ibid. Also included in this entry is the notation that the senior Stevens, sometime during 1893, sold their farm in Daysville and moved to Chicago, 5430 Lexington.


10Calendar, entry 1892.

11Ibid.

12Ibid.
Saturdays and frequenting the Newberry Library with his good friend, Alden Charles Noble. According to Mabel McIlvaine Baker, Custodian of Rare Books and Catalogues at the Newberry:

Stevens first appeared upon the scene . . . to request . . . that I let them examine at close range some rare printing items. There was something compelling in the steadfast gaze of the two, and contrary to custom I unlocked a case or two arranging the contents on a cloth-covered table near my desk. It was as if I had spread a banquet for them. They bent over, exchanging glances and awestruck whispers. . . .

For about an hour they feasted, and when they rose to go, I could see that a decision had been reached. The next time I saw Tommy Stevens and his friend, they had bought a font of good type and had established The Blue Sky Press.  

Noble and Stevens were not only the owners and publishers of The Blue Sky Press, which operated from "under the front stairs" of the home on Lexington, but they were also its main literary contributors, in collaboration or individually. And throughout the life of The Blue Sky Stevens penned his literary offerings under three pseudonyms, Michael Kinmark, John Alwin Wright, and Richard Barnabite.  

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13White, 280.
15Calendar, entry 1899-1900.
16Calendar, entry 1900.
so that *The Blue Sky* would appear to have a respectable number of
talented contributors. 17

Not only did the Blue Sky Press pull Stevens away from the
Armour Institute, but the death of his father, William Gurney Stevens,
on February 6, 1900, and his mother, Charlotte Wood Stevens, in
April of the same year, forced him to end his college career and find
work. In April of 1900 Stevens, blonde and blue eyed, went to work
handling printing and engraving for Mr. Simpson, advertising manager
for the Santa Fe Railroad. Simpson, also a poet, and Stevens be-
came lasting friends. 18

Stevens' work in advertising, printing, and engraving for the
Santa Fe did not prevent his continuing to direct the work of the Blue
Sky Press. While his position with the railroad company gave him
valuable training and experiences in the trades, it also provided him
his first trip to the Southwest. 19 And his venture with *The Blue Sky*
magazine not only added to his capital but taught him the printing trade

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19 White, 281. It may be said of Stevens' first trip to New Mexico that the experience influenced his later writing.
and allowed him to design in the field when he "started a small art magazine and press for limited editions."

Seemingly never content to pursue one venture at a time, a condition that followed him to the end of his life, Stevens' activities in the last years of the century indicate an increased interest in the arts and a diminishing concern with engineering work. His early propensity for writing found an outlet in *The Blue Sky*; this modicum of success encouraged him to branch out. A prolific writer, Stevens not only kept his own press well supplied, but he offered some of his creations to other publications. A Mr. F. F. Seymour, Chicago publisher who evidently returned an article to Thomas Wood, took time to write a comment about the unfavorable criticism of that work.

He reminded Stevens,

> Having clearly justified in your own mind the cause for writing or printing or doing anything you should no longer be much concerned with the opinion of others. In fact, I believe that one should only listen to such opinions enough so that they may be used to mold the next thing one is to do. . . .

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These remarks, if not prophetic, perhaps encouraged Stevens for he published in the Bachelor Book, Stilleto Magazine, Philosopher, and Fulcrum. Accompanying this expanding literary activity was a rather non-illustrious association with the production of a minstrel at the Armour Institute. And in the following year, while still employed by the Santa Fe, Stevens was "invited to belong to 'The Little Room,' a group of artists and writers who met for tea in Ralph Clarkson's studio in the Fine Arts Building, Chicago." In addition to his wages for his work with the Santa Fe, in 1902 Stevens received $715.00 for his writing. His printing knowledge found expression in "Lettering for Printers," [a number of articles that later became the first edition of Lettering and] . . . 'Art and the Printing Craft'. and the first influences of the Southwest may have been

\[22\text{Calendar, entry, 1900.}\]
\[23\text{Letter from F. G. Larkin, Manager of Armour Institute of Technology, Glee and Mandolin Club, to T. W. Stevens, December 26, 1900.}\]
\[24\text{Calendar, entry, 1901. Among the members were Lorado Taft, Oliver Denent Grover, Edith Wyatt, Elia W. Peattie, Hamlin Garland, and Henry B. Fuller. Correspondence in the Stevens Collection shows a close relationship between Stevens and Garland for many years.}\]
\[25\text{Calendar, entry, 1902.}\]
\[26\text{Ibid.}\]
evidenced in his "A Song of Arizona" published by Out West, A Magazine of the Old Pacific and the New. 27

Steadily Stevens transferred his interests and talents from engineering problems to the "creative aspects of art and literature," 28 and these abilities brought him a teaching position at the Chicago Art Institute from 1903-1912. He began teaching lettering; later illustration; mural painting. Also lectured on History of Art, taking over the courses Chas. Francis had resigned, and some of Mr. French's [the President of the Institute]. W.M.R. French was looking forward to retiring, and hoped to train T.W. for his place. However, T.W. did not look forward to a life of that sort, knowing too much of the policies of the board of trustees at that time. And also being a creative artist, the idea of an executive job was not attractive to him. 29

And Stevens' creative interests were apparent throughout his tenure at the Institute. He continued his painting, lettering, writing, and designing bookplates. 30 By 1904 Stevens had published verse in the Cosmopolitan, House Beautiful, and The Inland Printer. 31 But probably the most significant creation of that year in relation to his

27 Letter from Charles F. Liemonis to T. W. Stevens, April 5, 1902.

28 White, 281.

29 Calendar entry, 1903.

30 Ibid.

later vocation was the writing of the play, "The Spanish Main," in collaboration with his friend, Alden Charles Noble. This play was produced at the Art Institute in 1905.

Although his position at the Institute and his literary endeavors occupied much of his time, Stevens married Helen Bradshaw, an artist and etcher, on July 6, 1904. Their honeymoon was typical of the adventuresome life they led in their almost 38 years of marriage. They "went by boat to Petosky, Michigan, train to Mancelona, wagon to cabin on Cedar River. Painted, fished, wrote, read, until Sept." Returning to his post for the fall term, by December Stevens was in charge of the Department of Illustration, was teaching a class in costume at the Institute, and was seeking information about the publication of a "new condensed work on historical costume, for artists and art students."

The year of 1905 was one of great activity. Still occupied with multiple endeavors, Stevens maintained a diary which records

32 Interview with Peter Marroney, Head of Theatre Department, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, March 30, 1972. Mr. Marroney described the Stevenses as willing to travel anywhere if they had a piece of wire (for their car) and $10.00

33 Calendar, entry, 1904.

Blue Sky Press publications, poetry published and written, stories, a contract for illustrations, ballads, and lettering, a painting, selling of "Lesser Tragedy," revision of a book for the Rock Island Hotel brochure, and the acquisition of a "small [art] magazine called The Pageant for which Stevens chose and edited the material as well as designed the pages. The seven volumes published included material of Christina Rosetti, with a note by Wallace Rice, and lyrics of W. S. Gilbert."

The production of the 1904 play, "The Spanish Main," on June 5-6, 1905, in Fullerton Memorial Hall by the students of the Life and Illustration classes of the Art Institute was another creative experience. And in July the Stevenses relaxed from the pressures, in Mancelona, Michigan, where they lost the baby. T. W. had to rouse a neighbor in the night and drive 7 miles with horse and buggy in a sandy road, to get the doctor, who had to see a seriously ill patient first. T. W. buried the baby alone, under the maple tree. This is the germ for an episode in Westward Under Vega, 1938.

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35 Calendar entries, 1905.

36 Announcement, Art Institute, Chicago; University of Wisconsin, 1903-1913, Vol. 45, Stevens Collection.

37 Calendar entry, 1905.
Stevens' "The Spanish Main" received no reviews in 1905, but the production of his next work, "Cellini of Florence," presented April 26-27, 1906, in the same hall "under the general direction of C. Milford Giffin and Thomas Wood Stevens" received favorable notices. The reviewer noted:

Particular attention has been given to the correct costuming of the play and a worthy attempt has been made to produce a faithful picture of artistic conditions during the later renaissance in Italy. . . .

It was as restful as an hour under the trees on a warm day in August, for the costumes delighted the eye and the lines were pleasantly stirring.

The author, Thomas Wood Stevens, an instructor at the Institute, has endeavored to reproduce the Florentine life of that period and has woven a delightful romance around the principal figure which is partly imaginary and partly true to biography. 39

At the time of the "Cellini" production Stevens had not officially declared the theatre as his vocation. Rather the performance at the Institute represented one of his "myriad of interests" connected with art and literature. These growing interests probably prompted a four months trip to Europe for the Stevenses in the

38 Announcement, Vol. 45, Stevens Collection.


40 White, 281.
summer of 1906. Europe offered them the Paris Salon, the Gutenburg [sic] Museum, Rheims, Maintz, Cologne, Holland and Belgium. They saw paintings and etchings, studied painting with Brangwyn, and visited with Louis Parker, English pageant Master, during a pageant rehearsal.\textsuperscript{41}

Steeped in artistic experiences, Stevens returned to Chicago in September in time to meet his classes at the Art Institute.\textsuperscript{42} While teaching a full load at the Institute, Stevens, in collaboration with Wallace Rice, wrote and produced "The Topaz Amulet, A Christmas Masque" for a student presentation on December 18. Of this production one critic found the play suitable for a Christmas revel.

And if in their amateur clutch they obscured some of its luster they nevertheless treated it with reverence, gave it a setting worthy as they could devise and deserve only credit for conscientious effort.\textsuperscript{43}

The turn of 1907 brought forth increased numbers of literary publications. Continuing to publish in the previously mentioned

\textsuperscript{41}Calendar entries, 1906.

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{43}Newspaper clipping, undated and untitled, Vol. 45, Stevens Collection.
Inland Printer and the Cosmopolitan [about which F. B. Rae wrote to Stevens in 1901, "send your stuff. They want new men to write. The dam magazine is very on the bum. . . ."]44 he expanded to Harper's Weekly, New York Times Saturday Review, Bohemian, and Town and Country. Stevens' works included stories, --one entitled "The Hidden Channel" under the well-used pseudonym, Michael Kinmark--articles, and poems.45

While Stevens published articles, stories, and poems prolifically, his attention to plays increased significantly. During 1907 he wrote and produced "MacSkimming the Thespian" and "Wireless Dispatch" and directed a repeat performance of "The Topaz Amulet." And when at the close of the year the newly organized Cliff Dwellers of Chicago invited Stevens to write and direct a pageant for them, a promising and challenging theatrical venture appeared.46

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45 Calendar entry, 1907.

46 Ibid. There is some confusion about the date of the opening of the pageant, "Lighting of the Fire." The Calendar shows an entry for 1907 but the List of Poems, Stories, Articles, Pageants gives the date as 1908.
Whatever the exact date of the Cliff Dwellers pageant, 1907 or 1908, the year 1908 was a decisive year for Stevens. According to his own notes on his career record he "began theatrical work" at this time. In a letter to J. William Kennedy, University of Illinois, in 1931, Stevens wrote that the Donald Robertson Players, a traveling troupe which performed art theatre productions in Chicago and adjoining cities beginning in 1907, impressed him. Robertson, a Scottish actor turned manager of the Robertson Players, produced Stevens' play, "The Chaplet of Pan." Stevens declared to Kennedy:

My interest in the Theatre had always been keen, and in 1908 I became a sort of Chicago representative and stage manager for Donald Robertson who produced a play I had written in collaboration with Wallace in 1905. . . . All my spare time after this went to dramatic activites.

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47 Career Record, Vol. 46, Stevens Collection

48 Letter from T. W. Stevens to J. William Kennedy, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, May 1, 1931. Robertson's repertoire of plays included works of Ibsen, Goethe, Bjornson, and Molière. On August 29, 1908, Robertson presented Stevens' "The Chaplet of Pan" at the Ravinia Theatre, an open-air theatre that resembled the Garden Theatre in St. Louis, Missouri, Calendar entry, 1908.
Stevens' enthusiasm for Robertson's work with the art theatre rather than the commercial theatre found expression when Stevens wrote:

The most original of recent movements... is the opening of the Art Institute to the significant struggles for an artistic drama.

The Art Institute has for a number of years enjoyed the use of a beautiful audience room, known as Fullerton Hall... Here the lectures on art have been given. At stated intervals, the lecture has been supplanted by an orchestral concert. From time to time the students have used the hall for theatrical performances.

Last season... Mr. Donald Robertson... announced that he would give a series of performances with a company organized by himself, and would present plays of known merit. With an artist's enthusiasm, he pinned his faith to a line of masterpieces, and set out to do, without the ostentation or the financial backing, the very thing the New Theater had failed to do. 49

Inasmuch as Stevens was still teaching at the Institute, he was unable to forego his faculty responsibilities for theatre work. He completed his teaching at the school and taught art class in Antioch, Illinois. The Calendar for 1908 shows both of the Stevenses teaching for four weeks "beginning June 22," at Sylvan Beach, Channel Lake, Antioch, Illinois. Thomas Wood taught oil painting and composition.

while Helen directed the classes in etching. The most prominent entry for this year is one set completely apart which merely states, "Worked with Robertson." Outside of his own remarks that he was a kind of stage manager for Robertson, little information is available of Stevens' activities with the company. Stevens' prominence as a theatre man emerged in 1909 with his tremendously successful pageant, The Pageant of the Italian Renaissance, presented for the Antiquarian Society of Chicago, January 25, 26, and 27. Stevens recalled:

The Pageant of the Italian Renaissance at the Art Institute, one of the first dramatic pageants in America. The success of this led to The Pageant of Illinois at Northwestern; the next year, The Old Northwest at Milwaukee; and The Pageant of St. Louis, given in conjunction with Percy Mackaye's masque in 1914. From this time I became a sort of specialist in civic and community drama; the work requires some imagination, a swift technic in research, literary and dramatic experience, and a knack of the organization of community spirit.

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50 Clipping. The Sunday-Record, Chicago, June 7, 1908.
51 Calendar entry, 1908.
52 Calendar entry, 1909.
53 Letter from T. W. Stevens to J. William Kennedy, May 1, 1931. The dates of presentation of these pageants are found in the Calendar, entries 1909 and 1911; The Pageant of Illinois, October 7-9, 1909, and The Old Northwest, June 12, 15, 18, 1911.
Stevens, called the "Father of the American Pageant,"
commented some thirty years later that when he wrote The Pageant
of the Italian Renaissance for the Antiquarian Society "they didn't
know what they were going to get, and I didn't know what I was going
to give them." But the production received wide acclaim, and
from that time until May, 1941, Stevens wrote and directed almost
200 pageants, at least 30 after World War I. His most successful
pageant, written in collaboration with Percy Mackaye's masque, was
The Pageant of St. Louis in 1914. There were 7,500 in the cast;
80,000 people attended the four performances; the $20,000 profit
helped bring about the present municipal theatre in its first form.

Considering the pageant too powerful an instrument, Stevens
refused to use it as a money raiser for community profit after the St.
Louis endeavor. Beseiged to produce pageants, however, Stevens
found the work provided a handsome second income, particularly in
lean periods and offered a way for him to assist the war effort in
1917-1918. Answering a call "for something to commemorate the
draft," Stevens wrote a Red Cross pageant, The Drawing of the Sword,
which played not only to audiences across the United States but to the

54 T. W. Stevens, "On Pageants: Personal Notes," Vol. 54,
typewritten manuscript, page 1, 1939. Stevens Collection.

55 Calendar Book Account entries, 1909-1940.
A. E. F. in Europe. A second pageant connected with the war effort and for which he received a gold medal was Joan of Arc, which Stevens produced on a large scale in Pittsburgh before taking it to France. He commented that his Joan of Arc was "almost the identical scenario which Shaw afterward used for St. Joan."57

Convinced that pageants were awesome creations and that successful ones were built on something the community really cared for, Stevens also recognized that whereas British audiences would accept a four-and-a-half hour work, Americans could take only two-and-a-half hour productions. Consequently, Stevens' pageants employed "compressed speech and significant action."58 The demise of artistic pageants in the United States occurred because, as Stevens saw it, "after the war commercial racketeers and cheesecloth shows

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57 "Artists' and Writers," Santa Fe New Mexican, June 26, 1940.

58 Stevens, "On Pageants."
in high school produced a period of pageants of boredom; the trouble wasn't in the scheme but in the unskillful use of them. 59

Stevens, with seemingly endless energy and talent, filled requests for pageant productions whenever possible. But by 1909 theatre activities and the related arts of painting, designing, and writing held his primary attention and consumed his spare time. Delighted with Robertson's production in Fullerton Hall during the academic term 1908-1909 at the Art Institute, Stevens wrote to Mr. N. H. Carpenter, Secretary of the school, presenting the merits of the productions and requesting an additional season by the company:

Drama is an art, and may become, (if in fact it is not now,) an art with a very great influence upon the people. We do not consider it good to leave the arts of painting and sculpture wholly to those who practice them for mercenary purposes, but we set up exemplars of these arts for the public good. . .

But for the art of drama, as distinguished from the theatrical business, no public work of importance has been carried out. The experiments already made in

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59 Stevens, "On Pageants." This study will refer to Stevens' pageantry work only in passing. Extensive information covering his achievements in this area--texts, clippings, notes, photographs, dates, performances--fill volumes 30-43 in the Stevens Collection. Additional manuscripts, notes and articles are scattered throughout. Recalling humorous incidents connected with his pageants, Stevens said, "The funniest I can remember was a prominent citizen of St. Louis coming to me with his costume for a plains Indian in his hand and saying, 'Hell, man, I'm a grandfather.' " "Artists' and Writers," Santa Fe New Mexican, June, 1940.
this field are not without profit. . .and the work already in successful operation in Europe may be taken to point the way of accomplishment.60

The belief that really worthy drama was found in the art theatre never altered for Stevens. A personal witness to the current practices of popular commercial theatre, he set forth a plan by which an ideal art theatre could be achieved under the auspices of the Art Institute, "a forethought pertinent to the later Goodman effort."61 In the letter to Carpenter Stevens said:

Briefly, the plan is this: a permanent stock company should be organized, and with its players a permanent repertoire developed; the company should be an artistic body, controlled by a Director, who should be solely responsible for the work of the stage; and this organization would be a self-sustaining one, capable of electing from its own number a successor to the Director.

The plays would be selected and presented for the purpose of giving to the people the best and broadest literature of the drama, making the work educative in its plan, and at the same time popular in its influence. For just as great pictures will be as readily accepted by the public, (when they are offered,) great plays will always find attendance if presented under the proper conditions, and to the people who care to see them.62

60 Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to N. H. Carpenter, March 20, 1909; also Calendar entry, 1909.

61 Calendar entry, 1909.

62 Letter from Stevens to Carpenter, March 30, 1909.
Even though Stevens argued the aesthetic value of such
drama for students and public alike and the worth of a theatre free
from commercial considerations and changing policies of city
government, if such a theatre were supported by the municipality,
Carpenter and the Board of Trustees did not accept his idea. It is
possible that W. M. R. French, still President of the Institute in
1909, held his convictions of 1903—that the dramatic arts should be
excluded from a connection with the school no matter how high such
an art theatre could raise the standard of dramatic art. At any rate
the directors of the Institute did not encourage the hospitality of the
honored institution to an art theatre venture.63

During the years 1910-1912 Stevens lectured in art history
at the Institute, etched, painted, and wrote, but he extended his
efforts in behalf of theatre over more and longer periods. As to what
factor caused Stevens to choose a vocation in the theatre, nothing in
his early life or training pointed to such a livelihood per se, and yet,
as he was to realize and emphasize later, almost everything he
studied and every job he held contributed significantly to his success
in the theatre.

Melvin White found that, as is usual, Stevens' interest in
the theatre

63Ibid.
developed gradually, almost imperceptibly. Shakespeare was his nursemaid from early childhood. And as soon as he went to Chicago, where plays were available to him, he and his sister attended everything.  

Knight's study supports White's view and notes:

Scattered theatre programs in the Stevens Collection, in addition to Mrs. Stevens' memories of theatre-going attest to the variety of dramatic offerings presented during the winter seasons in Chicago. Maurice Browne and his wife, Ellen Van Volkenberg, had a repertory theatre, Ben Greet and his company made frequent appearances, Fritz Lieber and his Shakespearean Company, and Julia Marlowe and E. H. Sothern were among the guest artists who appeared.  

The Chicago Little Theatre, in a brief five-year period, added importance "to the art theatre movement in this country." Not only did The Chicago Little Theatre present noncommercial productions, but the personnel of the group were trained artists. One member was Cloyd Head, the advance man for Browne's "The World's Greatest Peace Play" which toured the United States, who joined Stevens in his third season at the Goodman Theatre.  

64White, 282. This information reached White in a personal letter from Helen B. Stevens, July 8, 1947.  

65Knight, p. 16. Maurice Browne directed The Chicago Little Theatre, E. H. Sothern had been connected with the New Theatre in 1910-1911, and during World War I Sothern and Stevens worked with the Y. M. C. A. overseas.  

These several acting companies offered Stevens a variety of art productions, but perhaps the work of Donald Robertson was the first direct influence on Stevens in his choice of the theatre as a vocation. Knight states that Robertson and men like him influenced Stevens indelibly:

Stevens might possibly have remained a painter who had a sparetime interest in the drama and who did occasional pageants if it had not been for people like Donald Robertson, American actor and first director of the Chicago Theatre Society in particular. Kenneth Goodman, the Chicago playwright; Whitford Kane, English character actor who was first brought to Chicago by the Society; and B. Iden Payne, who was brought to Chicago from England in 1913 to direct the acting company of the Society. Association with these men during the years 1911-1913 may easily have been the deciding factor that caused Stevens largely to put aside his painting and etching and devote himself to creative theatre work for the remainder of his career. 67

In 1910 Stevens studied art at the Institute under Sorolla, painted murals, helped to organize The Chicago Society of Etchers, collaborated on a one act play, "Goya," with Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, acted in A. C. Noble's play "The Fall of Granada," 68 and wrote an innovative article about educational theatre. 69 He commented that although the theatre as an institution, the stage as

67Knight, pp. 24-25.
68Calendar entry, 1910.
a social force, the drama as an art had been voluminously criti-
cized it had been little studied. The current financially entrenched
theatre no longer risked experimental works or "works in the
artist's way;" even the universities that examine the history of the
theatre rarely produced dramatic offerings that display more than
mere amusement. Stevens concluded:

The real fact developed through all this study is that
the drama is only incidentally an amusement; that it
is a serious literary form, terse, eloquent, marvel-
ously immediate in its touch of the perceptions; that
it has in it noble expressions of the conception of
justice, flaming outbursts of all the major emotions;
motive, character, and will; all, so far as the theatre
of our day is concerned, seldom significantly inter-
preted. 70

Stevens regretted that playwrights Molière, Calderon, Goldoni,
Goethe, Ibsen, Hauptmann, Maeterlinck, Bjornson, Giacosa, and
the Elizabethans were unknown to the American dramatic system at
present. Later at both Carnegie Tech and the Goodman Theatre
Stevens corrected this oversight by producing the works of some of
these authors, his choices significantly reflecting Robertson's
schedule of presentations. 71 Apparently by 1911 Stevens' theatrical
activities had greatly increased. In that year he and Kenneth

70 Ibid.
71 Knight, p. 19.
Sawyer Goodman collaborated on two masques and two pageants. By 1912 Stevens seemingly was in greater demand. He published plays, masques, and pageants in the Stage Guild Publications, a group organized to produce and publish plays, collaborated with Goodman to direct a film, "Montezuma," made on the dunes but never released because of light struck reflections, published two articles on pageants, "On Pageants," Atlantic Educational Journal, September, 1912, and "The Pageant as a School Exercise," School Arts, June, 1912, wrote a scenario for "Rembrandt," directed a Shakespeare Festival in Madison, Wisconsin, a Madison County Pageant in Edwardsville, Illinois, and lectured in Atlanta, Georgia, in June, and in Madison, Wisconsin, in November.

Stevens' connection with organizations and institutions in Wisconsin through his lectures at the University of Wisconsin and

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72 Calendar entry, 1911.

73 Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Alden C. Noble, January 12, 1912. Later in its development the Stage Guild, assisted in its formation by Goodman and Stevens, did not produce many plays but continued to publish paperbound editions, usually at a slender margin of profit, of plays by Stevens, Goodman, Goodman and Stevens, and Goodman and Ben Hecht.

74 Calendar entry, 1912. There is a portfolio of stills of this production in the Stevens Collection.

75 Ibid.

76 Letter from Dr. Joseph Jastrow to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 15, 1912. Jastrow asked Stevens to speak to the "Women's Club of Madison" on the subject of pageants and their significance under the auspices of the university.
his assistance "in a course in Festivals at the summer session of
the University" became permanent when he accepted a position
with the University of Wisconsin for the 1912-1913 term as "Lecturer
on Art History." In September, 1912, the Stevens family, now
four--a son Alden, named for Alden Charles Noble, born July 1,
1907, and a daughter, Phoebe, born July 16, 1912--moved to
Madison. From this new location Stevens not only taught at the Uni-
versity of Wisconsin but "continued to commute and lecture weekly
at the Art Institute."79

In the University of Wisconsin bulletin Stevens outlined his
course in The History and Appreciation of Art.

The course deals with the history of painting, and also
to a lesser degree with sculpture, architecture, and
the decorative arts. . . . The interdependence of the
arts at various periods will be studied, and finally an
effort will be made to give the student an outlook upon
modern art. . . .

The students will also have access at stated hours to
the lecturer's studio, where work in mural painting,
etching, and other media will be carried on, and where
a more intimate knowledge of the artist's way of working

77 Letter from P. W. Dykema to Thomas Wood Stevens, February 24, 1912.

78 Letter from the University of Wisconsin to Thomas Wood Stevens, May 23, 1912.

79 Calendar entry, 1912.
may be acquired. There will be three lectures a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Stevens' notes, written in ink and pencil on 3 x 5 blue cards, for a class in Civic Art indicate that he employed a historical method in teaching his class and complemented his twenty-seven hours of lectures with frequent field trips to examine structures and sculpture in the city. Of the influence Stevens exerted on his students little is known. But of his impact on the theatrical scene in Madison much is available.

T. H. Dickinson, teacher of English at the University of Wisconsin and primary organizer of The Wisconsin Dramatic Society (1910-1916), wrote a perceptive article about Stevens, the man and the artist. Dickinson noted that The Wisconsin Dramatic Society was a group of people of a peculiar emergency whose movement in the theatrical realm was a spontaneous outcropping for two generations of educational, cultural, and political institutions. In 1912-1913 the group included Zona Gale, novelist, Laura Sherry, professional

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81 Lecture notes, University of Wisconsin, Vol. 45, Stevens Collection.

actress and producer, William Ellery Leonard, Dickinson, and T. W. Stevens, "the only artist in the group... who knew more about the theatre crafts than all the rest of us together...")³³

The group in Madison thought of themselves as a part of a "broader renaissance" which included centers in Chicago, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and other towns in Indiana and Illinois.

These things were separate but they were all parts of a current which drew us together and carried us along... With his genius for frictionless action, his universal friendliness, Tom Stevens served as a shuttle over the whole field of the middle west.³⁴

Aware of the movements in theatre coming from Italy and Russia--Gordon Craig the 'visionary and iconoclast' and the Russians steeped with a 'psychological neurosis' that announced the coming of the social revolution--and aware that the indirect influence on the American theatre was enormous Stevens maintained his own objectives. Dickinson wrote that Stevens never surrendered to cults. He was thoroughly American and level-headed. He knew every trick of the new lighting, of the platform stage, and of the Commedia dell'Arte. But he applied these always to the purposes of the sapient stage. He never feathered at the edges, or substituted the pattern of cult for the crystal clear impression forwarded by his mastery of the medium...³⁵

³³Ibid.
³⁴Ibid.
³⁵Ibid., 315.
According to Dickinson, Stevens had "no abstract theories about the place of the theatre in society. . . . he was not concerned with the intellectual issues that come to clash in its substance. What was needed was a new subtler medium by which humanity could be revealed in its essence, free from the trappings of an artificial stage, free also from moribund logic and intellectualism." The theatre of Stevens' youth was "shamed and humiliated by its poses, posturings, and habiliments," and he wanted the theatre to be a medium which "would fuse playwrights and audiences into a ball of fire." The 'theatre' meant something specific to him as indicated both by his own plays and the plays to which he turned for the satisfaction of his own taste. His theatre was one of mediums and not of substances . . . . Let others delve into the theatre of the soul. He would provide the alert and expressive medium by which this theatre would break through to the perceptions of the audience.

That was what Tom Stevens did. . . . He not only helped to create and enrich the medium. He fostered and scattered abroad the agencies which have put the medium to use.  

86ibid., 314.  
87ibid., 316.  
88ibid.
During 1912-1913, Stevens' influence was not limited to his colleagues in Wisconsin for he maintained close connections with associates in Chicago through his weekly lectures at the Institute and his continued collaboration with playwright Kenneth Sawyer Goodman in numerous Stage Guild Publications. Furthermore, he lectured extensively on pageants, studied Greek for the purpose of translating dramas, served on the editorial board of The Play-Book, and published, prior to August, 1913, five articles on the theatre. 89

Two of the five articles asked the scope of theatre in Chicago be expanded. In "Prospectus of a Plan for the Establishment of a Civic Theatre in Chicago" Stevens proposed a non-commercial theatre, supported by the city, devoted to dramatic art for all the people, and carried on as a permanent municipal work fashioned after theatre programs prominent in Europe. 90 He argued that the Park Commissions already

maintain museums and play grounds, and furnish, in summer, music free to the people. The newer park houses also provide for the exhibition of pictures. It is a comparatively short step to their presenting the most popular and human of the arts, the drama. . . .

89 Calendar entries, 1913.

We believe that the most popular and truly civic form for beginning the work is by the establishment of an outdoor theatre adapted from the Greek model.\footnote{Ibid.}

The second article, published in \textit{The Play-Book}, noted that if the theatre was to grow as an art endeavor, if experimental work was to be facilitated, and if the supposedly unpopular and more serious works were to be outlawed then a review of one such successful adventure should be made. Citing Robertson's record Stevens recorded:

Thirty-two plays in all. The experiments, if one wishes to look at the matter so, of three years. Plays of many types, selected for artistic grounds alone, with less thought of the box office than any similar series, simply because, most of the time, there was no box office. There was an audience, however; and there was acting, and indomitable courage. All factors in any laboratory work worth doing in this field.\footnote{Thomas Wood Stevens, "Robertson: A Record," \textit{The Play-Book}, I (May, 1913), typewritten manuscript, Vol. 54, Stevens Collection.}

Both articles apparently upheld Stevens' contention, one that never wavered, that a noncommercial theatre which could present all kinds of drama was needed in America. And in the second work Stevens prominently emphasized the importance of a repertory theatre in such an endeavor. No evidence indicates that Stevens was
successful in arousing general support or interest in either an experimental or civic art theatre for Chicago.

Perhaps Chicago failed to heed Stevens' suggestions, but others farther away were seemingly eager for his ideas. Sometime in 1913 President Hammerschlag of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Russell Hewlett, Dean of the School of Applied Design, invited Stevens to come to Carnegie to "work out a plan for a school of stage-craft." Before Stevens accepted the invitation he

took a long walk over the hills at Madison, thought it all over, and went to Pittsburgh with another scheme: not for a school of scenery and lighting, not for applied design in the narrower aspect, but for a school of the arts of the theatre—something more comprehensive and more difficult. . . . [Hammerschlag said,] 'Come here and work on the curriculum. You ought to be able to start next winter—the theatre will be built by that time.'

In a letter to a friend referred to as 'Cowley' dated July 2, 1913, Stevens wrote that he had just accepted the job at Pittsburgh. Stevens explained that University of Wisconsin President Van Hise seemed dismayed to lose Stevens to Carnegie and even offered to

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94 Ibid.
meet the salary, an increase of $8.33 a month, but Stevens welcomed the chance to do serious work in the theatre.

He regretted leaving Madison, where all had been happy in a hundred ways, never met before. The opportunity at Carnegie, with the men there, Pres. Hamerschlag [sic] and others, was not to be lost, to lecture on Art. Chicago was losing a promising figure of the theatre. As Knight explained:

Chicago artistic circles are waking up to the fact that Stevens is contemplating a move much further away from Chicago than Madison. Kenneth Goodman is the leader of a futile attempt to keep Stevens in Chicago.

Goodman tried to pressure a theatre job for Stevens at the University of Chicago as well as the Chicago Art Institute. President French still opposed dramatic activity at the Institute, and although the Institute was eager to have Stevens return the director said "he cannot use enough of Stevens' time to pay him a living wage unless he assigns him a great mass of routine work, absolutely unconnected with any theatre activity."  

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95 Calendar Account Book entries, 1913-1914.
96 Calendar entry, 1913.
97 Knight, p. 35.
In September, 1913, Stevens moved to Pittsburgh where he remained until the fall of 1924. For the next eleven years he devoted his energies to establishing and directing the "first collegiate degree-granting Department of Drama in the United States. He built its policies, arranged its curriculum, and planned its future."99 Somewhat prophetic were the remarks of Goodman who was "disturbed at the thought of parting from Stevens and was sure that Stevens will be back in Chicago before many years doing something grand in the theatre."100

Before Stevens returned to Chicago to do something "grand" in the theatre there, he created a great Department of Drama at Carnegie Institute of Technology. When Stevens arrived in Pittsburgh from Madison he "had to think through the whole problem involved in establishing a university school of acting, directing, designing, and writing as part of the four-year undergraduate course."101

99White, 283.

100Letter from K. S. Goodman to T. W. Stevens, July 14, 1913. The correspondence between Goodman and Stevens between 1913-1918 indicates continued interest in Stevens' work and a profound personal and professional friendship between the two men.

Stevens carved out of the fresh material of his theatre knowledge the first theatre ever developed as part of an American college curriculum. There was no precedent or example to go by when Carnegie Institute of Technology decided to establish its theatre course. Professor Baker was teaching at Harvard... but as far as official Harvard was concerned he was teaching the history of the drama and the principles of argumentation, not theatre.  

Stevens and Hammerschlag discussed at great length educational theory, and for months Stevens "carried a paper curriculum in... [his] pocket, and tried it on actors, playwrights and dramatic critics."  

But our experience and observation of art schools, and Hammerschlag [sic] opinion of them, brought us up hard against the larger problem--the combination of the technical training with related work in the humanities. We were to give a Bachelor of Arts degree in Drama, which was revolutionary enough in itself. Hammerschlag [sic] was quite sure it was a proper thing to do, provided the students earned the degree within the meaning of the law, which in Pennsylvania was fairly explicit; but in earning the degree the student's time was not to be wasted.  

The time of the students was not wasted, for after much consideration Stevens and Hammerschlag established a curriculum  

102 Ibid.  
103 Thomas Wood Stevens, "Carnegie Tech: First Phase," Typewritten manuscript.  
104 Ibid. The typewritten manuscript "Carnegie Tech: First Phase" found in Vol. 54 of the collection was written about 1915 and published as "The Background: The First Plan and the Goal," Theatre Arts Monthly, XXIII (July, 1939).  

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by which the students of dramatic arts were to be trained in "a
general knowledge of the technique of the drama, approaching it by
literary and historical courses as well as through a severe training
in direct technical work."105

In order to achieve a balanced curriculum satisfying the
Pennsylvania laws and the requirements that were aimed at teaching
"not what the student could learn in his first six weeks in stock, but
what he could not learn there"106 Stevens divided the work systemati-
cally. "Classes and lectures included diction, drawing, costume,
dance, scene painting, French, German, history of the theatre,
history of play production, and surveys of painting, sculpture, ar-
chitecture, furniture and decoration. There was constant rehearsal
and production of plays, constant application of the knowledge re-
ceived in the classroom to the practical problems of the theatre."107

Devised in 1913 and put into practice in February, 1914, the
four year course at Carnegie opened with "a class of eighteen
students."

105 Goni Michaeloff, "William Poel: His Theatre Work and
Lectures in the United States in 1916," Diss. Louisiana State Uni-

106 Stevens, "Carnegie Tech: The First Phase," Vol. 54,
Stevens Collection.

107 White, 283-84.
We took all who presented themselves with proper credentials, and on this account we learned about as much from them as they did from us; we learned what afterward turned out to be the most essential feature of the whole plan, that quality, talent, potential artistic power were the valuable ingredients—nothing else mattered half so much.  

As Stevens wrote in "Carnegie: The First Phase," manuscript in Volume 54 of Stevens Collection, the "general studies... were none too popular at first." But Stevens was apparently a stickler for the severe program he had laid out. As he had planned, 

the first three years the curriculum allows the student little time to consider any high degree of personal specialization. He spends part of his first year in learning correct diction, a matter which, beginning with severe and continued exercise in reading, does not by any means end with the hours formally given over to it. He also begins drawing in the art school, and before the year is over applies this training to the sketching and tracing which are inseparable from the work in the history of costume, and in elementary scene painting. Dancing is required... French is required... and some study of German, both leading as rapidly as possible to conversation and the reading of plays.  

Stevens stressed the historical approach to the study of the theatre as an institution--its architectural and technical equipment at


different periods as well as its various methods and customs of play production in the past. Also included were historical surveys of painting and sculpture, of architecture, of furniture and decoration—all related in some way to model-making and scene painting. However, "the girls substitute work in costuming for scene painting, but they do not forego the survey courses on that account."\(^{110}\)

But with all this study of general and related art areas the student still had to give most of his time to the rehearsal and production of plays, for as Stevens stated in "A School of the Theatre Arts," published in The Drama, November 1914:

No matter what his ultimate intention may be, he [the student,] must come to see a play as a thing of movement and emotion, of sound and picture, rather than as so many pages printed in a book.

Rehearsals often lasted until five a.m., according to an interview Molly Knight had with B. Iden Payne in Austin, Texas, April 22, 1949, and students were expected to rehearse through the holidays.

The first flight of students in the early years at Carnegie, according to Stevens, proved to have that material which benefited both the program and the school. Students like Charles Meredith, Frederic McConnell, Howard Southgate, Ted Viehman, Mary Blair,

\(^{110}\)Ibid.
Lucy Barton and Eula Guy "set the pace." And true to his belief that "quality, talent, and potential artistic power" were the valuable ingredients of a successful student, Stevens accepted Neal Caldwell, in 1918, a transfer student with a poor academic record from the University of Illinois. As Stevens wrote:

> It does not worry me in the least as frequently that type of record only means that the boy has been on the wrong track, and will work perfectly well when he is interested in what he is doing.  

Stevens showed great insight in selecting students; tryouts were employed beginning with the second year, and never more than fifty students were in the Department of Drama at Tech at any one time.

Not only did Stevens organize the curriculum for the Department of Drama at Carnegie but he was instrumental in the final design and furbishings of the theatre itself. As he commented in "Laboratory Theatre," *The Play-Book*, August, 1914, pages sixteen and seventeen.

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112 Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to William Chauncy Langdon, March 6, 1919. Caldwell proved to be a skilled actor and director; he went with Stevens to the Goodman Theatre and on to the Little Theatre of St. Louis where he was the Assistant Director until his untimely death in January, 1933.

113 Stevens, "Carnegie Tech: First Phase."
A laboratory theatre should differ from the common type in no way. In practice, a theatre for the use of an educational institution has certain functions not common to all theatres, and so may be designed with a view to meeting its special uses. The chief point to consider is, of course, that it be a real theatre, and not a lecture hall which may, with great difficulty, be adapted into an awkward substitute for one.

In the same article Stevens described the interior of the theatre, located in the Applied Design Building, as "finished in white oak, richly carved. The shape is oval, the ceiling of the plaster-work with a centre of stained glass; and so strongly has the oval shape been maintained that even the steel curtain follows the characteristic curve."

The auditorium held 420, and the painted decorations on the curtain represented the great periods of architecture. Of the stage equipment, Stevens detailed it as:

the usual and work-a-day type; a gridiron, with twenty-five sets of lines, and the common arrangement of fly-galleries. The lighting installation is very full, with a modern, dead-face switchboard and complete alignment of dimmers. The stage floor is trapped over its entire surface . . . Of scenery, only that made by the students is available.

The usual form of the steel curtain has suggested adaptation of a scene-drop which works behind masks or portals of the same material (a gold-colored velour) and these masks do away with the necessity for more sets of tormentors.  

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A diagram of the physical plant of the Carnegie theatre, in the "Laboratory Theatre" article, showed a property room and an organ occupying space to the left and right of the proscenium stage and whose walls formed a portion of the enclosure of the auditorium per se. A scene dock was to the rear-left of the actor's stage, and planned for later construction was a "rehearsal stage and rehearsal room behind the large proscenium stage" while dressing rooms were on "the floor above" and "the use of a large orchestra. . . [was] not contemplated at present."

The work involved during the fall of 1913 and the spring of 1914 in completing the theatre building and in organizing and establishing the curriculum and policies for opening classes in 1914 did not prevent Stevens from adhering to his practice of absorbing and participating in all the theatre and related arts that he could. By October of 1913 Stevens had made preparatory steps for the Pageant of St. Louis in 1914, had worked on a series of plays, had exhibited etchings at Dartmouth, and had met, for the first time, B. Iden Payne in his repertory in Chicago. 115

Stevens' meeting with Payne developed into a lasting association which found the two men frequently working together. The first working association was at Carnegie. With the new theatre and

115 Diary, entry, 1913, Stevens Collection.
the drama department of Tech at his disposal, Stevens brought many visiting directors, or guest masters to the school. The Department of Dramatic Arts at Carnegie Tech opened February 9, 1914, and presented the first major production, Shakespeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona on April 23, 1914, with Donald Robertson as the guest director. The belief that visiting directors with their certain specialties could expose the students to multiple styles of acting and directing prompted Stevens to bring "guest masters" to Carnegie.

One of the first scoops, theatrically speaking... was the visiting instructorship of the twenty-eight year old Irish playwright, Padraic Colum. It was Colum's first visit to America, and he... [was] impressed with Stevens and with the fine work the beginning students were doing.

Other guest directors were Mrs. E. P. Sherry of the Milwaukee Little Theatre, Douglas Ross, B. Iden Payne, William Poel, Thomas Wood Stevens, "A School of the Theatre Arts," The Drama (November, 1914), 638. Found in Vol. 54, Stevens Collection.

Michaeloff, p. 32. With this production a tradition was established, that of performing a Shakespearean play each year on the playwright's brithday, April 23.

Letter from Padraic Colum to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 23, 1914. Colum directed The Shadow of the Glen by Synge, The King's Threshold by Yeats, and his own The Betrayal, Michaeloff, p. 42.

Whitford Kane, and Chester Wallace. "We ranged over the drama, ancient and modern, with the hopeful idea that all good fish were for our net." 120

Widening the students' scope of directorial styles seemingly accompanied Stevens' conviction that all kinds of plays should be attempted. In achieving a flexible theatre program at Carnegie Tech he incorporated the works of masters and unknowns. Eager for new material and alert to developing movements in the drama Stevens declared:

No set rule underlies the choice of plays; we do the work which seems likely to help, in the doing, the greater number of the students engaged. We look forward to giving performances of plays written by our own students from time to time, as part of the regular work of those who take the course in dramatic composition. 121

Still another practice employed by Stevens was that of doing outside theatrical work frequently. He had an understanding with the Carnegie Institute that permitted him to participate in theatrical activities independent and away from his teaching schedule at the university. Knight wrote:


121 Stevens, "A School of the Theatre Arts," 639. Not only did Tech produce Shakespeare, but other "major productions included Greek tragedies, plays by Molière and Sheridan ... modern comedies and serious drama. 'Old and accepted plays,' one acts and Tech plays were produced." Michaeloff, p. 39.
Even the great opportunity of teaching at the well-equipped theatre of Carnegie Institute does not blind Stevens to the necessity for avoiding an unbroken routine of teaching. Perhaps this was one reason his students gained such a varied knowledge of the theatre; they had the advantage of . . . Stevens . . . going out constantly into the field and gathering in new experiences.122

Even during the hectic early years at Carnegie Stevens apparently never relinquished his prerogative to participate in ventures in the drama and related arts separate from his duties at Pittsburgh. Between 1914 and 1918, the year that the war closed the Carnegie Department of Drama, Stevens covered the United States. He wrote, directed, or assisted, or all three, the pageants and masques produced in St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri, San Francisco, California, Newark, New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, Indiana, Florida, West Virginia, Nebraska, and Louisiana.123 He served as President of the Chicago Society of Etchers, served on the Jury for the Association of Artists in Pittsburgh, served on the jury for the Black and White Exhibition of the

122Knight, p. 46.

123Calendar and Diary, entries, 1914-1918. The pageant in New Orleans, "Louisiana A Pageant of Yesterday and Today," was written by Mrs. Maude May Parker and performed in the French Opera House, February 11, 1918, under the auspices of the Drama League for the benefit of a field hospital at Camp Beauregard. The Times-Picayune, February 12, 1918. Clipping, Vol. 46, Stevens Collection.
Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, was active in the Pittsburgh Theatre Association, attended the meeting of the American Federation of the Arts in Washington, D.C., wrote numerous articles—among them "A School of Theatre Arts" published in The Drama, November, 1914, "The Plan for a Laboratory Theatre," published in the American Bulletin, 1915—lectured extensively, published Lettering for Prang, contributed to the Stage Guild publications—the well known Masques of the East and West and Rainwald and the Red Wolf with Kenneth Sawyer Goodman—served as President of the American Pageant Association, and published a collection of plays entitled Nursery Maid of Heaven, and all the while directing the Department of Drama at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.


125 Calendar and Diary entries, 1914-1918. As a writer of dramatic works many of Stevens' plays were written for the amateur. The critic, Walter Prichard Eaton wrote of them: "Designed chiefly for amateur production . . . these plays nevertheless contrive to pack a good deal of charm and significance into brief compass, and are admirably adapted to their purposes. They are clean-cut, smooth, and dramatically effective. . . ." White, 289. Taken from "Books," New York Herald Tribune, June 13, 1926, p. 18.
The war years altered, slowed, and then stopped the offerings at Carnegie, but Stevens directed his energies to immediate needs. A call came for a pageant that would "convey to men being drafted, the reasons for the war."  

A Calendar entry for 1917 shows that Stevens wrote The Drawing of the Sword, later called the Red Cross Pageant, which played in over "100 cities in 1917-1918." Because of "the poor quality of war-time students and the flu . . . a natural cessation of the theatre activities at Carnegie" occurred. Released from the teaching schedule, Stevens applied his energies in writing a new pageant, Joan of Arc, and travelled with the Y. M. C. A., under the direction of Joseph Lindon Smith, to Europe to help "direct entertainment for the A. E. F." Returning from France in October, 1918, Stevens instigated an "intensive course at Carnegie for soldier talent directors . . . The teaching philosophy for this brief course stressed technique and methods to be used with any types of entertainment material rather than the more specialized approach needed to carry one particular play through to a successful production."  

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126 Calendar entry, 1917.
127 Knight, p. 81.
128 Calendar entry, 1918.
129 Knight, p. 81.
The war caused Stevens to write an article, "A Non-Commercial Theatre," which evidenced his awareness that with every man student in khaki and every girl working for the Red Cross "it is difficult to foretell the future development of the plan" of combining a college course with the technical training of a repertory theatre. But the war brought a greater, more personal, loss to Stevens in the "death of his dearest friend, playwright Kenneth Sawyer Goodman" who succumbed to the flu while at the Great Lakes Naval Training Hospital in Chicago while on active duty. However, his concern about the future of Carnegie and his grief over the loss of Kenneth Goodman did not prevent the Carnegie School of Drama from reopening on January 23, 1919.

With the reopening of Carnegie Stevens' objective was to rebuild the quality of the department. The superior training of previous graduates prompted many letters to Stevens in the early part

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131 Letter from T. W. Stevens to B. Iden Payne, December 9, 1918. In memory of his friend Stevens labored over compiling the one-act plays of Goodman. Diary, January 9, 1920. The publication of Goodman's unpublished plays in two volumes, Quick Curtains and More Quick Curtains, with a note by T. W. Stevens, became a reality in December, 1922.

132 Calendar entry, 1919. Knight gives the date of reopening as January 6, but the Calendar entry lists the later date of January 23, 1919.
of 1919. E. C. Mabie, in the English department at the University of Kentucky, asked Stevens to recommend "graduates and even exceptional undergraduate students for positions in the expanding field of college and university dramatic teaching." And colleagues seeking better jobs, because of the slack caused by the war, corresponded with Stevens because of his knowledge of the field and because of his authoritative position as a leader in the field.

As Stevens proceeded to revitalize the drama department at Carnegie, new names of talented students and faculty, some of whom who would in the future join Stevens in the Goodman theatre, appeared. A Miss Muriel Brown from Indianapolis, Indiana, applied for admission to Carnegie. Interested in children's theatre she had single-handedly launched into children's theatre in Indianapolis. Stevens was "greatly interested in the news of her independent

133 Letter from E. C. Mabie to Thomas Wood Stevens, January 12, 1919.

134 Letter from Irving Pichel to Thomas Wood Stevens, January 24, 1919. Letter from Frederick H. Koch to Thomas Wood Stevens, February 19, 1919. By 1921 Irving Pichel and Sam Hume were working with the outdoor Greek Theatre at the University of California at Berkeley, and "one of the first of Stevens' pioneer group of graduates to fill an important theatre position [was] Fred McConnell" who became the director of the Cleveland Play House but spent two years, 1919-1921, working with Pichel and Hume before accepting the position in Cleveland, 1921. Knight, p. 94.
activity and . . . [urged her] to come early" so that she could assist him and some of the "older" students in putting on a pageant in Pittsburgh for the Carnegie Institute Bureau of Mines, September 30, 1919.135 Others attending Carnegie were "Carl Benton Reid, John A. Willard, William Franklin, Hubbard Kirkpatrick, Dorothy Raymond, and Mary Ricard" who were showing "their quality" with Hardie Albright, Russell Collins, Norman Foster, and Arthur Lubin.136 Most notable among the new faculty members was Hubert Osborne who joined the staff and directed Everyman in January, 1920. 137

The Diary for 1920 indicates the sharpening of the Department of Drama at Carnegie entailed the normal schedule of teaching and marking exams, directing plays, and observing the academic procedures. These activities apparently did not prevent Stevens' writing and directing pageants--one with Donald Robertson presented August 10, 11, 1920--arranging at the Neighborhood


137Letter from T. W. Stevens to Fred McConnell, February 8, 1920.
Playhouse in New York for an April 20 presentation, and collaborating with Payne on the play, Poe. 138

As if these activities were not sufficient for Stevens, he utilized the medium of radio to summarize for a listening audience Carnegie's Drama Department. In an address in February, 1922, Stevens remarked:

... Carnegie Tech exists, not for the audiences, but for the professional training of the students. It is generally agreed that to learn an art one must practice it.

We are also asked sometimes what it's all for—why a technical college should go so deeply into a subject that the colleges have generally regarded as only an academic and cultural one. The answer is that the drama is an art—a great popular art which has, through the ages, voiced human experience and idealism. 139

As Stevens saw it the drama and the theatre were art that demanded artists skilled in their vocation. The actor, the actress, the playwright, and the producers each had his own detailed work, work that should be an artistic product. But of the producer, Stevens said:

138 Calendar entry, 1920.


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The work of the producer is less known, but grows each year more important in the work of the theatre at large. At his best, the producer is an artist competent to control all the factors in a production, to direct the acting, design and supervise the scenery and lighting, and achieve in the performance a harmonious and unified effect. His experience must include all the work of the theatre. . . .

The first requirement for a producer is of course imagination. . . to coordinate the various factors in the production, an executive stroke, a sense for the pictorial as well as the aural and literary values, and the application necessary to master all phases of a complicated piece of work.

The major item in the theatre is work needed for the production of a large and inclusive repertoire. 140

Stevens' desire for an artistic theatre, a product of creative and skilled people working in harmonious unity, governed his oral and written remarks, as noted in the previously cited commentaries. And although the university environment offered a near ideal situation for achieving his "desired" theatre, Stevens still groped for a repertory theatre of trained artists. He may even have hoped for "a great chain of university repertory theatres." 141

Whatever factor was lacking Stevens seemed less enthusiastic about his work for the years 1922-1923. Knight felt he showed "less


141 Whitford Kane, Are We All Met? (London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot, 1931), p. 251.
sparks" and offered "only brief discussions about casting problems; in his usually witty and definitive correspondence." Letters for February, March, and April of 1924 disclose that Stevens was "feeling ill and exhausted," was "experiencing fatigue and loss of interest in his Carnegie work," and was "recognizing the pressure of the school schedule... [noting it was] hard not to go stale teaching, even at best." Some of Stevens' dissatisfaction may have originated in 1922. It was during that year that "the first of a long series of letters is exchanged between Stevens in Pittsburgh and the Goodman family in Chicago; the subject is the planning and building of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre in Chicago." Stevens received a message from William O. Goodman, Kenneth Sawyer's father asking Stevens to come to Chicago at Goodman's expense to discuss the Goodman Theatre plans and the future use of the

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142 Knight, p. 124.
143 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Jane Ziegenfelder, February 16, 1924.
144 Letter of March, 1924.
145 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Lucy Barton, April 6, 1924.
146 Correspondence, 1922, Vol. 11, Stevens Collection.
building. The tone of the telegram is urgent and Stevens accepts the invitation almost immediately. Apparently actual construction on the building had not yet begun, and this conference with Stevens precedes by only a few days the trustees meeting at which final building plans were approved. No further mention of this conference occurs, but it is presumably highly important in Stevens' later decision to leave Carnegie for the directorship of the Goodman Theatre.\footnote{147}

Calendar entries for 1924 stated the year was

\ldots an extraordinarily difficult, confused, distracted year. Expenses were immense and hard to meet, causing endless anxiety. Contracts were slow to being consummated, and slower paying. Things hung fire to an unprecedented degree. The decision to change from Carnegie to Goodman was trying to conclude.

According to Knight, "there was a growing restlessness with the school routine during 1923-1924,"\footnote{148} and in May, 1924, Stevens admitted, in a letter to Percy MacKaye, that he was "planning to resign from his position at the Carnegie Drama Department and return to Chicago to direct the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre there."\footnote{149}

In 1909 Stevens advocated a plan for a repertory theatre associated with the Chicago Art Institute. And when Stevens left

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{147}{Knight, pp. 124-25.}
\footnote{148}{Knight, p. 128.}
\footnote{149}{Letter from T. W. Stevens to Percy MacKaye, May 24, 1924.}
\end{footnotes}
Madison for Pittsburgh in 1913 his friend Kenneth Goodman had predicted that Stevens would return before many years to do something "grand" in the theatre in Chicago. Since that parting, Stevens had been engrossed in the stream of American theatre. He had written and directed plays and pageants, opened the first department of drama in an American university, supervised a faculty, published prolifically, taught classes, lectured, and painted. Now Stevens was returning to Chicago to what promised to be his design of an ideal repertory theatre.

In 1908 Stevens advocated the need for a theatre of art which could become a reality through the efforts of a financially unencumbered repertory company. And although Stevens managed frequent excursions into the allied fields of pageantry, painting, and writing, his focus centered on achieving his ideal theatre. From the inception of the Department of Drama at Carnegie Stevens stressed those individual areas that would best train his students to fit into his concept of the art theatre. He stressed a wide selection of plays. Continental dramatists and American authors were analyzed and produced. He regularly brought the most competent directors to handle students in productions which demanded different acting styles.

150 White, 284. During Stevens' tenure at Carnegie the Department of Drama had produced some two hundred plays, "sixty-one of which Stevens personally directed." Ibid.
In training qualified theatre workers Stevens required a careful selection of applicants, rigorous rehearsal schedules, and diversification of production responsibilities. He worked his students to a high degree of excellence and trained "his graduates thoroughly to transform the untrained recruits into seasoned actors, directors, teachers, writers, and designers." He seemingly inspired his students to reach above their abilities and "to yearn for a theatre job of integrity, with opportunities for artistic experimentation." 

Entries for 1924 Calendar show that when Stevens accepted the directorship of the Goodman Theatre support for his plans for an endowed, artistic theatre with productions which encompassed the works of the classics, the modern, and the experimental by a carefully selected repertory company was given. The choice of theatre personnel was left to Stevens who had supervised the training of many outstanding talents then active in radio, dramatic education, civic and community theatres, and legitimate theatre.

At any rate, Stevens moved to Chicago in the fall of 1924 to start to work on the Goodman Theatre.

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151 Knight, p. 132.

152 Letter from Fred McConnell to T. W. Stevens, July 7, 1919.
Here Stevens settled down to active supervision of the half-constructed Goodman Memorial Theatre and began recruiting, by letter and telegram, his best Carnegie students to come and work with him in preparation for the opening of the Theatre for the 1925 season. 153

153 Knight, p. 128. A detailed study of Stevens' years at Carnegie may be found in Molly Knight's thesis, "The Theatre Work of Thomas Wood Stevens at Carnegie Institute of Technology As Seen in His Letters and Manuscripts," University of Arizona, August, 1949. An expanded treatment of the Carnegie years is in progress by Mr. George Schwimmer, Leixlip House Lodge, Leixlip County Kildare, Ireland, for Tulane University.
CHAPTER II

STEVENS' ORGANIZATION OF THE
KENNETH SAWYER GOODMAN THEATRE, 1922-1925

When the idea of a Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial
Theatre in association with the Chicago Art Institute originated,
the most logical person considered for the position of director was
Thomas Wood Stevens. He had been Kenneth Sawyer Goodman's
most intimate friend. "Together they had dreamed of the ideal
theatre... they had collaborated on many plays and pageants,
and Stevens had been a guide and an inspiration to the youthful
Goodman."¹ This close association between the two men was per-
haps the decisive factor that influenced William O. Goodman,
wealthy Chicago businessman, father of Kenneth Sawyer, and donor
of the theatre, to select Stevens as the director of the theatre
project.

Before he could accept the offer of directorship Stevens
had to resolve numerous issues. At the time the proposition
reached him he was in charge of a well-established, highly-
productive, and successful Department of Drama at the Carnegie

1Whitford Kane, Are We All Met (London: Elkin Mathews & Marrot, 1931), p. 264.
Institute of Technology. The Carnegie program, the result of Stevens' personal industry and inventiveness and operational since 1914, offered Stevens a prestigious and stable position and provided him with opportunities for artistic leeway and independent excursions into the field. His theatre department, already the model for similar departments in other educational institutions, had the academic and civic support of the community. A move to Chicago meant starting anew with an

experimental playhouse in a city which had never taken kindly to experiments; but his great friendship for Kenneth Goodman made him the pioneer he was. He came to Chicago before ground had been struck for the building of the theatre, and he supervised its very beginning.  

The offer to direct the Goodman repertory theatre, a gift to the Chicago Art Institute with which Stevens had been associated for nine years, was, if not fortuitous, somewhat ironical. Sixteen years earlier Stevens had advocated just such a theatre for the Institute, and, antithetically, it was young Kenneth Goodman who had predicted that Stevens, then leaving for Pittsburgh, would return to Chicago to do something grand in the drama. But before the proposal of the Goodman could become an actuality or the offer of directorship a reality Stevens apparently experienced misgivings, financial distress,  

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2 Kane, p. 265.
and terrific strain which permitted no rest over a two-year period.

From the first correspondence with the Goodman family in October, 1922, --a letter which detailed the intended plans for the venture--until Stevens resigned from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in the summer of 1924, Stevens generously advanced his suggestions. He contributed ideas to the effort somewhat secretively because of his position at Carnegie through letters and hasty sojourns to Chicago. The correspondence between Pittsburgh and Chicago was enormous. Letters passed between Stevens and the Goodman family, Robert Harshe, Director of the Art Institute, Howard Van Doren Shaw, architect-designer of the theatre building, and other Chica­goans with special interests in the ambitious endeavor. The profusion of writing and brief conferences was essential because of the multiple problems to be resolved from such distances and because of a common concern not to jeopardize Stevens' standing at Carnegie should the Chicago proposition fail.

For almost twenty-four months, according to correspondence, Stevens managed his responsibilities at Carnegie, shouldered independent activities of pageants, writing and directing, and unceasingly supported the development of the Goodman Theatre at his own expense. The combined pursuits did not lessen until the fall of 1924 when Stevens moved to Chicago. Once in Chicago to stay, Stevens, unhampered by distance and financial pressures,
seemingly experienced some relief and was able to cope with the immediate pursuits in a more favorable environment.

From the beginning the challenges of Goodman were demanding. The issues confronting Stevens were threefold: First, he had to suggest and evaluate structural design for the theatre, one that would satisfy the rigid building codes of Chicago, the budget, and the needs of a performing association. Second, he had to structure and define operational policies, ones that would gratify Stevens' desires for an art theatre and the Institute's needs for academic accommodation. Finally, Stevens had to select competent personnel, workers qualified to perform equally efficiently in the theatre and the academic environment.

Of the three almost simultaneous demands, Stevens' primary concern was the theatre building. One of the earliest letters that indicated Stevens' actual connection with the Goodman project came from William O. Goodman. He had retained a Chicago architect, Mr. Howard Van Doren Shaw, to draft plans for the theatre but Goodman had specified that Stevens should be consulted frequently about the structural scheme.³ Goodman's knowledge of

³Letter from W. O. Goodman to T. W. Stevens, September, 1922.
Stevens' designing ability and experience in the theatre prompted his demand for Stevens' consulting services. 4

The senior Goodman's request for Stevens' assistance illustrated good judgment for Mr. Shaw apparently knew little about designing a utilitarian theatre. When Shaw's first plans reached Stevens he was apparently a little frightened by the ignorance of good theatre construction revealed in the drawings. Although the initial scheme detailed a beautifully designed exterior the interior was "absolutely impractical as to facilitating play production." 5

Tactful in his criticism of the sketches, Stevens suggested in his reply that Shaw "let Stevens and his scene design students [at Carnegie] build elaborate scale models to test the workability of the plans." 6 Shaw evidently agreed to Stevens' suggestions, and new plans were forthcoming to which Stevens commented:

I think the revised plan is splendid. Have only some minor suggestions, but even the minor points might as well be considered.

First, I think the dome curve could be flatter; you do not need quite so much depth at centre (four feet less would be plenty) and that would make the section of the dome easier, and the masking at the top more secure.

4Ibid.

5Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Van Doren Shaw, October 20, 1922.

6Ibid.
Then, too, the sides might be carried out a little farther, to make side masking easier. I believe an ellipse would light better than a circle, and would give better working floor space. This would also give a little more lee way for the dressing room range.  

In the original plans of the stage proper Shaw had favored a revolving stage, but this idea changed, after consultation between the two men, to wagon stages. Discussing not only the wagon stages of the altered drawings but the overhead carriers as well Stevens noted:

The wagon stages need not come so far forward. Better allow two or two and a half feel clearance just back of the steel curtain line, to allow for the drop curtain and the use of false prosceniums. These last are almost inevitable in most productions—they look so much better than tormentors and take care of the overhead better.

The practical theatre man Stevens concluded:

The carriers above need not be deeper than 12 feet... The space to the east of the steel curtain run, off stage left, could well be enclosed for a property room.

7 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Shaw, January 20, 1923.

8 In 1919 Stevens had a policy about scene construction. He used as many unit sets as possible and employed false prosceniums—"a false proscenium constructed over the stage for the production of Payne's directed show, The Rivals... meant that Stevens could make 'dark changes of interiors' with ease." The false proscenium was to "become one of Stevens' successful and flexible scenic units." Letter from T. W. Stevens to former student Miss M. E. Kehoe, February 24, 1919.

9 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Shaw, January 20, 1923.
A sink and piping for gas stoves will be needed in the paint frame area. And it is very likely that a partition between the paint frame and the carpenter shop, with some easy circulation between, would be desirable; the work doesn't mix well, and the smell of paint and glue should be kept out of the auditorium. . . .[and] I can't make out where materials are to be brought in.10

10Ibid. Volume 22 of the T. W. Stevens Collection contains a set of blue-prints for the Goodman Theatre by Howard Van Doren Shaw. Which set of plans these prints represent is not recorded. When spread out the blue-prints cover a library table the size found in most reserve-book rooms of libraries. The eight pages of drawings, frayed and well-worn, were in no condition to be xeroxed or handled for any length of time. This investigator noted several footage notations which indicated that building restrictions governed much of the Goodman Theatre construction.

Because of its location in the city of Chicago, the Goodman Theatre could not rise higher than two stories. To reach the Goodman one had to "cross Michigan Avenue at Monroe Street, a viaduct area, go beyond the bridge over the Illinois Central tracks, and at the right a long stone wall, resembling a garden wall, marks the building of the new Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre . . . The entrance is on the east facing Lake Michigan, with a well-proportioned plaza before it. [Chicago Evening Post, September 1925, clipping from Stevens Collection.]

Forced to be constructed with a comparatively low exterior line, the theatre was built underground. Photographs of the construction work showed deep excavations and cavernous openings in the ground. The "long stone wall" was the upper portion of a retaining wall that towered over the workers. The auditorium and other work areas were located in this subterranean area and were reached by the audiences entering the main doors on the ground level and descending the grand stairway. At the foot of the stairway was a spacious memorial gallery, or foyer, which opened onto side hall entrances that lead to the seats in the auditorium.

Blue-prints of the individual portions of the building and correspondence indicate that the theatre structure utilized width and depth for height. The necessity for this arrangement, according to marginal notations, resulted because the site of the structure was next to the Chicago Art Institute.

However, this subterranean location and sound interference from the nearby railroad tracks demanded specific considerations of equipment, sound proofing, and shop management.
Stevens' letter of January 20, 1923, represents almost the total correspondence found in the Thomas Wood Stevens Collection of letters between him and Shaw pertaining to the building per se during the remainder of the year. But although Shaw infrequently relayed news of the building plans, which progressed slowly, Stevens heard from Robert Harshe, Director of the Art Institute, who wrote that "the scheme is working along toward completion as far as the drawings go, and the general consensus of opinion [sic] seems to be that it will be finished about this time next year." Furthermore, although the professional responsibilities at Carnegie demanded his attention, Stevens' Calendar entries for 1923 recorded several trips to Chicago and the surrounding areas at which times personal conferences may have been held. Pageants in Michigan and Wisconsin necessitated Stevens' presence in the vicinity of Chicago.

11 Letter from Robert Harshe to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 20, 1923.

12 Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Walter Prichard Eaton, April 23, 1923, carbon copy. Besides teaching and directing, Stevens continued his policy of bringing experts to the Carnegie campus. For the annual Shakespearean production, The Taming of the Shrew, in 1923 Stevens brought critic Walter Prichard Eaton to evaluate the Tech production.

13 Calendar entries, 1923. Stevens managed some time in Chicago, July 6 and 10, 1923. He also went to Ypsilanti, Detroit, and Kaukauna, Wisconsin during 1923.
In one of Harshe's letters to Stevens, the writer included, almost as an after-thought, the names of the new Theatre Committee appointed by the Art Institute to work with Stevens. Mr. Goodman, Mr. Ryerson, and Mr. Aldis would collaborate with Stevens on "other details" of the theatre. But the first mention of the "other details" did not reach Stevens until April 9, 1923, when Harshe first approached Stevens about the use of the theatre and Stevens' connection with it. He informed Stevens that

> The Trustees have not yet considered how the theatre is to be used, or its connection with the School. Whatever Mr. Goodman wants will undoubtedly have a great weight, and I think you know pretty definitely what both he and I want. Mr. Goodman's advice to you, therefore, is not to break away from Pittsburgh for the present, but keep in mind the strong probability of a post here in the future.

Harshe's letter was the first written proposal that mentioned a position for Stevens at the Goodman Theatre and the last mention of a position for many months. So while both the building of

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14 Letter from Robert Harshe to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 20, 1923. Mr. Goodman was on the Board of Trustees of the Art Institute, Ryerson was Vice-President of the Chicago Art Institute, and Aldis was a Board Member of the Institute.

15 No correspondence or memoranda at this point indicated the wishes of Goodman or Harshe. Stevens had voiced his opinions frequently in previous years in Chicago and at Carnegie, and it may be assumed that the three men were in agreement as to the purposes of Goodman.

16 Letter from Robert Harshe to Thomas Wood Stevens, April 9, 1923.
the theatre and Stevens' official capacity and connection with the
effort hung in limbo, he concentrated on problems at Carnegie.

Writing to Chester Wallace about the new 1923 enrollment at
Carnegie Stevens wryly commented:

It looks as though the Department were in for a big
year but the number of advanced standing educational
women among the applicants appals me. What can we
do with them? And in spite of all denials in the fall
they will all want to play the Shakespearean lead in
the spring--see if they don't. 18

While to Hugh Osborne, a faculty member working in New York for
the summer, Stevens wrote of his concern for class and academic
loads of both upper classmen and Freshmen students for the staff,
i.e., Viehman, Wallace, Osborne, and Stevens. 19

17Chester Wallace's last name was omitted in the heading
of the letter, but a reply to its contents was signed by Chester
Wallace. Mrs. Stevens' remarks in the Calendar suggested that
"Chester" was a co-author with Stevens of The Bolted Door pre-
[Continued on the next page]

18Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Chester [Wallace,]
August 12, 1923.

19Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Hugh Osborne,
September 9, 1923.
The nebulous position of Stevens for the rest of 1923 created extraordinary personal tension and anxiety, and this uncertainty continued until August of 1924. Mrs. Stevens recorded that 1924 was an extraordinarily difficult, confused, distracted year. [She] and daughter Phoebe were in New Mexico for Helen's health until June, when Alden (in Pittsburgh) had Scarlet Fever, and later (in Shepherdstown) the mumps. The expenses were immense and hard to meet, causing endless anxiety. Contracts were slow in being consummated, and slower paying.

According to the Calendar things hung fire to an unprecedented degree. And although divers factors pressed for Stevens' time, energy and money at least correspondence germane to the progress of Goodman resumed. Shaw's theatre revisions caused Stevens less concern over matters of general construction, and he concentrated on specific problematic factors--wagon stages and windows--in a letter of February 14, 1924:

The Goodman Theatre plan is better and better. The arrangement of the shops seems to me excellent, and as soon as I am allowed out of the house I will get together the information on the equipment that you want.

The windows worry me a good deal; they will undoubtedly increase the noise and vibration in the theatre, in spite of any wooden shutters that can be

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20 Calendar entry, 1924.

21 Stevens had a severe case of the flu which lasted from late January into February. Calendar entry, 1924.
put up. Also, I doubt their actual usefulness: we have a shutter over out [sic] theatre to let in daylight, and it has not been opened, so far as I know, in the last three years.

Another point I am anxious about. The setting of scenery on the wagon stages will take about three times as long for each setting, if the wagon is above the stage level at the point where the set is made—that is, in the wings... On a level, one man can manage a slat or two-way of any height up to eighteen feet... If the flat has to be lifted... it requires two men, and takes very much longer. The only chance to make quick and quiet changes without an overhead... is to use the wagons at maximum efficiency.

Whether confined to his home for two or three weeks or not Stevens secured desired information for Shaw and posted a lengthy and detailed letter to the Chicago architect on February 21, 1924.

Stevens had consulted "a number of people" about equipment for working the wagon stages and concluded that a "cable system" would be the most feasible.

[It] is much less expensive, and allows of the most simple mechanical parts, and a ready use of hand power in emergency...

The wagon stage itself should be a light but rigid steel frame, with a wooden floor; it should ride on about twenty small fiber wheels, on steel tracks in the base of the run-way...

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22Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Shaw, February 14, 1924.

23Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Shaw, February 21, 1924.
Under the centre of the run-way, a depressed cable slot, with an endless cable connecting on a drum with a simple motor... In practice, the motor would be started just before one wants to move the wagon. There would be a release block at each end of the way... and in case of an accident, of such a nature as to jam the track, the fuse would blow before anything broke.  

As for the overhead carriers Stevens remarked that they were more complicated. For them, (for the handling of ceilings, draperies, cut drops, etc.) I suggest the following: Two steel frames, of a grid-iron type, with head-blocks (sheaves) carried in them like a section of a regular theatre grid; these frames ride on hanging travellers ("Barn Door" type) running in ceiling slots... These carriers ride to the side to meet the flygalleries from which they are operated... In operation, the fly-man goes to the gallery, lets in his lines as usual, hangs his scenery, and ties it off... Anything that can ordinarily be hung in the theatre, lighting units as well as scenery, can be set and hung by this method.  

So that there would be no mistakes, Stevens enclosed some rough sketches "just as suggestions to make all this a little clearer."  

Perhaps the sketches sufficed for Stevens' presence in Chicago, planned for February and postponed until March because of illness, because Shaw was able to offer the layout to the contractors without Stevens' having to personally supervise the working diagrams.

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24 Ibid.  
25 Ibid.  
26 Ibid. No sketches were found in the Stevens Collection.
No belated changes were presented, and estimates requested from contractors by March 24, 1924, were offered.27

In the meantime, Stevens began a quiet campaign to recruit personnel for Goodman.28 Letters scattered through 1923, 1924, and 1925 indicate a "tremendous enthusiasm" which greeted Stevens' offers to work with him "again in active play production in a repertory theatre."29 A reply from former student Helen Forrest to Stevens' offer to join him in the Goodman plan exemplified most of the answers he received:

If I tried to tell you what it meant to me when I came home and found your letter, I fear you would think me utterly maudlin. I can tell you I wept salt tears of joy. The opportunity to create beautiful things and to act again and in such a place with such people, well it is like having the door of heaven opened a crack for me to look through.

Now I can go ahead until next Fall getting ready to do the things that will present the selves in Chicago better I hope than I ever did them at Tech. I shall stay here in

27 Letter from Howard Shaw to T. W. Stevens, March 10, 1924.

28 The volumes of correspondence show that Stevens consistently retained his contacts with those he considered talented and creative. As Knight noted, "Anyone who had worked with Stevens, and whom Stevens had found to be reliable, industrious, and possessed of ideas, had almost invariably found himself associated with Stevens in later years... as actors, teachers, and costume designers." Knight, p. 14.

29 Ibid., p. 128.
New York till July at least and take the course... in pattern cutting and costume construction that will give me a more professional touch in turning out costumes...  

Concluding her letter Miss Forrest assured Stevens that she would not mention the plans to anyone "but they will be the secret joy by which I live between now and then," and reassured Stevens that her course in voice placement would help her "greatly to get more power and variety technically" but would not cause her to "elocute."

The task of personnel selection did not preclude Stevens' position as consultant on the theatre plant. Earlier remarks between Shaw and Stevens must have included reference to costs of lighting units, for in March, Howard Southgate offered some lighting prices to Stevens. In an evidently long session with Pevear of Massachusetts, Southgate uncovered the following information:

The pit lights for the cyc are already designed with the white circuit and to make up just R.G. Blue would overbalance the present cost. The bridge lights have no whites but of course use a different angle. I realize the whites are out of the pit. He is vehement about their tinting value. ... His price is $4316 for

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30 Letter from Helen Forrest to T. W. Stevens, March, 1924. Miss Forrest was to act in repertory and supervise costume construction.

31 Ibid. Stevens placed great emphasis on superior diction but was fearful of elocution per se, according to Forrest's letter.
both bridge and Pit units . . . [and] includes supports and adjustments—color frames but no lamps or slip connectors.\(^2\)

Thinking the information might not reach Stevens in Chicago, Southgate mailed an additional copy of the "lay-out" to Arvid Crandall, a lighting expert and colleague who was assisting in the theatre construction.\(^3\)

As if the designing and consulting undertakings for the Goodman Theatre and the selecting of a future staff were not totally time consuming, in addition to his academic responsibilities at Carnegie, Stevens played host to visiting Trustees from Chicago who came to Pittsburgh to observe his work prior to a commitment from them concerning the directorship of Goodman.\(^4\) But this visit of a dignitary from the Institute and Stevens' trips to Chicago eventuated in the first working plans and personnel selection for Goodman which Stevens noted in his correspondence.

In another letter to Helen Forrest, after a three day appointment in Chicago, Stevens confirmed that the Theatre was to

\(^{32}\) Letter from Howard Southgate to T. W. Stevens, probably March, 1924, because of its location in the Goodman Volumes. Southgate wrote "Prevear" for Pevear.

\(^{33}\) Ibid. Southgate thought the price high. The final budget for equipment was not established for many months, but preliminary estimates were being gathered.

\(^{34}\) Letter from J. F. McCabe, Trustee, Chicago Art Institute, to T. W. Stevens, March 25, 1924.
be very fine with all the "shops . . . considered and planned from the beginning," and the building "ready for occupancy in the fall." As for the working plans, Stevens asserted:

The trustees now plan to open their department in the fall, [1924] making a thorough and careful preparation for the opening of the theatre in the middle of the winter; taking on part of the faculty and fellows in the fall, and beginning to build up a student body in September . . .

I have talked about you to Mr. Harshe . . . and to Mr. Goodman, and they like the idea. So I suggest that you do nothing to bind yourself to anything after September 15 without first consulting me.

None of this is yet on paper; no contracts drawn with anybody. So it is not to be talked about--especially as I am not free of the responsibility here. [But] I really believe it offers the best chance for a real art theatre in America . . . [and] the Trustees agree entirely to my scheme of two companies--Repertory and Studio, and all the rest of it.

To Southgate Stevens reiterated that preparatory work in the Department would begin in the fall, and "I hope very much that it will work out to have a place for you" on the faculty, so, "don't tie yourself up."  

35Letter from T. W. Stevens to Helen Forrest, March 23, 1924.

36Ibid.

37Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Southgate, March 25, 1924.
In his apparent eagerness to begin the Repertory Company early, Stevens outlined for Howard Southgate the working procedures at Goodman as similar to those of Tech "but with nine or ten fellowships added, the fellows do the bulk of the acting in the Repertory performances—the students in the Studio performances. Fellowships to go mainly to Tech graduates, or at least to people of that much experience in the work . . . It allows them to start with productions of an advanced order."38

Stevens' enthusiasm may have ebbed some when Harshe's first letter of a definitive pronouncement of Stevens' association with Goodman reached him. Encouraging though the letter was as to the matter of endowment for the theatre, the unofficial aspect of the letter that spoke of Stevens as the head of Goodman still mentioned loopholes:

Mr. Goodman told me this morning that he and Mrs. Goodman were considering endowing the theatre if you became its head. I thought you would be pleased to know this as an evidence of their affection for and confidence in you.

Have you had your conversation with the Dean yet? You will understand that this is unofficial, but if you could tell me unofficially what the result of your conversation with MacGoodwin was, I would be in a position then to make you an offer when we have a

38 Ibid.
Trustees' meeting, and you could write out your conditions.\textsuperscript{39}

Stevens hastened to speak with his superiors at Carnegie and answered Harshe within three days. Correspondence note that Stevens found, in an informal conference, he could come to Goodman without breaking up the Carnegie staff seriously "and with a very friendly feeling that some sort of exchanges can be worked out between the two organizations if we find they can be helpful."\textsuperscript{40} The Institute's official offer came in a letter, April 10, 1924, in which director Harshe offered Stevens the position of "Head of the Department of Dramatic Art in the School of the Art Institute, at a salary of $6000 per annum." Simultaneously, Harshe posed pertinent questions relating to the procedures that Stevens should consider in his new capacity;\textsuperscript{41}

Please let us know when . . . you think your work with us should begin, and when and how often it will be possible for you to come to Chicago during the construction of the theatre.

\textsuperscript{39}Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, April 4, 1924.

\textsuperscript{40}Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, April 7, 1924.

\textsuperscript{41}Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, April 10, 1924.
I think we would all like to have . . . an outline from you covering your suggestions of the inter-relations that should exist between the head of the Department of Dramatic Art, the Dean of the School, the Director of the Art Institute, and the Trustees of the Art Institute. 42

Although Harshe's letter eliminated the uncertainty and secretiveness of Stevens' connection with the Goodman it failed to relieve other pressures related to the future. A month elapsed before Stevens could outline departmental inter-relations for three serious questions from architect Shaw demanded Stevens' immediate attention: (1) Stevens vetoed purchasing imported equipment when "approximately the same thing in America, some standard line" would lessen the difficulties "involved with repairs and replacements . . ." 43 (2) Stevens felt that overhead carriers had to be deleted because

[They would be unworkable] with the roof levels as planned . . . The best possible substitute will be a slightly wider light bridge, and a series of sheaves and head blocks, working up and-down stage; the lines to tie off on a pin rail at the light bridge, and to terminate in weights that will pull into sockets in the ceiling, the bottom of each weight to be camouflaged to match the ceiling. 44

42 Ibid.

43 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Howard Shaw, April 12, 1924.

44 Ibid.
(3) Excited over a recent demonstration of "mercury switches and very gradual dimmers" Stevens recognized the value of a board at the back of the auditorium but requested Shaw to abandon the idea because of structural problems. And, in the letter to Shaw, Stevens enclosed information about a new material that might prove successful on the wheels of the wagon stages:

The enclosed circular may be of interest as a material for the wagon wheels. They tell me here [the Commercial Engineering Laboratories] that the material, "Formica," would stand the sort of treatment those wheels will get. 45

Although he belatedly answered Harshe's letter Stevens wrote the senior Goodmans of his acceptance of "Head of the Department of Dramatic Art" on April 19, 1924. Goodman immediately answered that Stevens' acceptance of the position gave him and Mrs. Goodman a "great deal of pleasure, and confidence in the outcome of the project in which we are all so interested." 46 An enclosure in Goodman's letter, a memorandum from Harold F. Swift, Chairman of the Board of the University of Chicago, requested a "luncheon [with Goodman] to discuss the possibility of the University of Chicago and the Art Institute cooperating in some sort of

45Ibid.

46Letter from W. O. Goodman to T W. Stevens, April 23, 1924.
mutually satisfactory agreement in the study of Drama and the use of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre.

One month after he received the official offer from Director Harshe Stevens wrote his formal acceptance of the position of "Head of the Department of Dramatic Art," May 14, 1924, and outlined his views on operational policy:

So far I have sent no formal letter in reply to yours of April 10th, chiefly because I have not had the data on which to formulate answers to your questions . . . . Some of those matters have taken shape, and I will try to set them down.

I believe the function of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre, and of the Department of Dramatic Art, to be two-fold: first, a thorough, professional school of the arts of the theatre; and second, a living repertory theatre, presenting to the Annual Members of the Art Institute, and to the public, productions of plays, as examples of dramatic art. These productions

47Letter from Harold F. Swift to W. O. Goodman, April 17, 1924. Goodman was anxious for this meeting and wanted Swift, Frank Logan, Vice-President, Art Institute, Harshe, Director, Art Institute, Raymond Ensign, Dean, Art Institute, Shaw, Stevens and himself to be present. Frank Logan wrote a personal letter to Stevens welcoming him back to Chicago. "I want to tell you how your answer and especially your acceptance has heartened us all here regarding the magnificent theatre and the Dramatic Art Dept. As you have been told before, you belong here by right of discovery, and early connection. The importance and possibilities ahead of you and us, our imagination only can do justice to, and I want to say we are all ready to welcome you with open arms." Letter from Frank Logan to T. W. Stevens, April 21, 1924.

48Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, May 14, 1924. Because of the importance of this letter, the policies outlined, this investigator has included the major part of the text.
should include classics, tried and distinguished modern plays, and new works given in the theatre for the first time.

The Department school should be handled, so far as its policy, records, and registration proceedings are concerned under the general supervision of the Dean; but its technical problems must be in the hands of the Head of the Department, and the faculty of the Department should, in the special nature of the case, decide what applicants should be admitted, and prescribe and carry out the necessary entrance examinations or tests.

The management of the theatre, 'front of the house,' in the matter of ticket sales, advertising, bulletins, arrangements of special dates and consideration for the Annual Members, the general budget for productions, and in fact all matters of the audience, I should hope to handle under the supervision, and so far as possible with the active participation of the Director and his staff.

The work of teaching; the production of plays, both Studio and Repertory; the choice of plays, and the methods of production to be followed; the stage management of the theatre; the making of scenery and costumes; the negotiation for plays, in fact, all back stage matters, should be the responsibility of the Head and Faculty of the Department.

Stevens noted that the use of the Theatre for outside interests "or its use for any purpose other than that of the Department, should be arranged by the Director, but always in consultation and with the consent of the Head of the Department" and not at the

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Ibid.
expense or welfare of the Department. Unable to prepare the budget, as requested, Stevens concluded:

I accept the appointment, with an understanding that it involves such responsibilities and conditions as those noted, with the greatest hope and enthusiasm.

With the acceptance of the appointment to Goodman Stevens' responsibilities as head of the new department increased. One of his first tasks was the drafting of brief outlines of courses to be offered in the Dramatic Department, the resumés to be published in the forthcoming catalogue. In a letter from Dean Raymond Ensign to T. W. Stevens, May 13, 1924, the dates for the fall, winter and spring terms were listed: (1) September 29–December 19; (2) January 5–March 27; and (3) March 30–June 19th. Stevens' original manuscript of courses, dated May 25, 1924, outlined a curriculum which included the following branches:

Rehearsal and Performance; the practical work . . . for each student . . . assigned under the usual customs and disciplines of the best theatres. Classical and modern plays will be given, and students must hold themselves in readiness to play when and as directed.

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50 Ibid.

51 Ibid. In his letter of April 10, 1924, Harshe requested that Stevens complete a budget from September 1924 to January 1, 1925, and another budget from January 1, 1925 to January 1, 1926. Letter from Harshe to T. W. Stevens, April 10, 1924. Unable to obtain information related to the budget from the Institute, Stevens delayed setting up a budget for the new department.
Personal Technic; Individual and class work [in the fundamentals of] interpretation, gesture, and the use of the speaking voice.

Scene Design and Scene Painting; designing of scenery . . . making scale models, . . . painting of actual scenery of various types . . . emphasis on unit-set and plastic scenery, as modern equipment of the theatre, with its sky dome and wagon stages [allowing] experimental effects.

Stage Craft; the manual branches of the work of the theatre. . . . Men will be members of the stage crew for . . . two years. . . . women [in] costume and property crews. . . . [Work includes] construction and handling of scenery, stage management, and lighting of actual productions.

Dancing; English Folk Dancing required . . . the first year; [Other types] required after the first year.

Costume; designing and making of period costumes; their care and use. . . .

History of the Drama; Lecture course on history of theatre as an institution, its architectural forms, production methods and traditions; together with a parallel reading of the great plays of various periods. All students. Other literary courses, as required by the Department, will be given in cooperation by the University of Chicago.52

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52 Typewritten Manuscript of Courses, Vol. 23, Stevens Collection. From an "Extract from Minutes of Board of Trustees, June 12, 1924," representatives from the Art Institute and the University of Chicago agreed that "students in the Dramatic Art Department of the Art Institute be admitted to courses in the University of Chicago, provided they reach University standards of admission, and that payment therefor should be at the rate of $25 per course . . . . It was moved and seconded to concur in the recommendation," Extract of Minutes, Board of Trustees, Art Institute, June 12, 1924, Vol. 23, Stevens Collection.
Such catalog descriptions may have been deferred, however, as "bids [for the theatre plant] so exceeded finances" that there was agreement among Board members that the Department of Dramatic Art should postpone its opening from September until January 1, 1925, maybe even for a year. 53

It would seem to me that if we tried to run the Department for an entire year without being able to use the Theatre . . . it would cause a great deal of dissatisfaction and, of course, the financial overhead would be impossible for us to swing. 54

Harshe believed that although Stevens might feel he was just marking time he could use that time wisely "supervising the construction of the Theatre . . . and arranging a co-operative scheme with the University of Chicago." 55

Stevens agreed to Harshe's suggestions and added that the "two or three people" he had unofficially hired could be taken care of, for the interim months, on pageant jobs. 56 Attempting to equate the differences between the building expenses, estimates, and bids, Stevens wrote Mr. Goodman:

53 Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, June 16, 1924.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Letter from T. W. Stevens to W. O. Goodman, June 26, 1924.
You will notice that he [Shaw] has re-arranged the dressing room space. . . . The same applies to the large rehearsal room; and when it is finally built, if ever, I have a different treatment to suggest—to make it a small studio theatre, where the beginners can give their first performances.

The two-story treatment of the long north gallery I approve. The main entrance, memorial gallery, and the auditorium remain very much as they were, except that there is more plaster and less stone, and an oak trim to the proscenium instead of the dark marble.  

Goodman apparently appreciated Stevens' efforts at cutting the expenses but advised him that he was certain they could put up "a good building to start with within or near the original amount, and add to it when it seems necessary . . . but we must get the work underway."  

Financial worries seemed to plague the Goodman program for the remainder of 1924--finances for the building and the personnel. Stevens wrote B. Iden Payne that "all work in Chicago is postponed until January, on account of building delays."  

Stevens arranged for a fellowship payment to Arvid Crandall who

57Ibid.
58Letter from W. O. Goodman to T. W. Stevens, June 30, 1924.
59Letter from T. W. Stevens to B. Iden Payne, July 21, 1924.
was to have worked at the Goodman in the fall of 1924 but was without a job, stranded in New York, unable to receive benefits from the Veterans' Bureau because of a lost file, and owing his landlady "three week[s] rent, and ... just about at the bottom" of his purse.60

Financial problems continued to pursue Stevens, personally and professionally. During the month of August, 1924, while Stevens was bargaining for the sale of his house in Pittsburgh, the final two estimates for construction of Goodman arrived from Shaw. He had itemized for a Mr. Charles L. Hutchinson of 134 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois, a builder, revised estimates of "Goodman Hall, Addition to the Art Institute, based on specifications dated June, 1924" for his consideration:

We have in the main ... maintained all the features of the original design for the important rooms, namely: the Entrance Vestibule, Main Staircase, Memorial Gallery and the Auditorium of the Theatre proper.

The principal changes are: the omission of the Rehearsal Gallery at the south east corner; the omission of the space at the south west corner off the stage, which included the Dressing Rooms, Costume Making and Costume Storage Rooms. The Dressing Rooms are now placed over the north and south aisles and Gallery #3 of the original has

60 Letter from Arvid Crandall to T. W. Stevens, July 18, 1924. Letter from T. W. Stevens to Arvid Crandall, July 24, 1924.
been changed to two stories, with the Costume Storage on the 1st floor and the Costume Making Room above.

The Cyclorama Pit and the Orchestra Pit have been reduced in depth, and the Stage Pit has been greatly reduced in size. The stage floor is now one continuous level, without sunken tracks.61

In a letter Shaw informed Hutchinson that no discussions had occurred between his office and the General Contractors for the general work, but that alternate estimates were being requested from the heating contractors and plumbing and sewage contractors. An estimate showed the one place Shaw and Stevens did not wish to economize was the electric wiring, stage switchboard and dimmers, "the layout of Lee Simonson and Pevear," for that, equipment was the finest available," and "lighting [was considered] one of the most important features of the theatre."62

The grand total on August 11, 1924, prior to adjustments, was $307,779. The adjusted estimate, without wiring and plumbing, of that date was $369,954.63 The increased estimates reached Goodman who agreed to put into the Theatre an additional seventy-five thousand, making the total $325,000. Stevens explained to

61Letter from Howard Shaw to T. W. Stevens, August 11, 1924.
62Ibid.
63Ibid. An itemized estimate appears in Appendix B.
Goodman that if there were financial cuts, "we would have to sacrifice capacity, dignity and beauty, and that we don't want to do. So [Goodman] authorized the Institute to proceed on that basis."64

Stevens wired a Day Letter telegram to Goodman in Connecticut:

Working over bids with Nourse and Milman, [consultants] find we can reduce the total figure to 320 thousand or less excluding architect's fee. I have so far agreed to no cheapening in lobby, memorial gallery or auditorium. Present plan splendid throughout. Even at present prices, building with auditorium this size might be built within appropriation, but not of such monumental character or distinguished design. Hope you can send me instructions care your office this week.65

Goodman's response read:

Telegram received. We are willing to go ahead on basis you mentioned. Have written Hutchinson to have Institute authorize letting of bids not to exceed three twenty five. Any possible saving below that figure to apply on architect fees. We pay balance of fees in excess of the three twenty five.66

64 Letter from W. O. Goodman to T. W. Stevens, August 20, 1924.

65 Day Letter telegram from T. W. Stevens to W. O. Goodman, August 21, 1924.

66 Telegram from W. O. Goodman to T. W. Stevens, August 23, 1924. Although this is the final figure stated by Mr. Goodman, another estimate, dated August 29, 1924, listed the total figure at $386,301. Almost $17,000 more than the amount agreed to. See Appendix B. Other correspondence related to the cost of Goodman included in the Stevens Collection indicate that W. O. Goodman contributed another hundred thousand. Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, "Fall", 1924.
Although the financial worries regarding the theatre seemed resolved, Stevens' own financial troubles were acute. About October he wrote a distressing letter to Mr. Harshe:

The work [on the theatre] still doesn't start, and I am getting deeper and deeper [in debt]. Have made three trips to Chicago to try to put things forward . . . but still the main issues delay. My little personal organization is going to pieces. . . . I have spent all I could afford on the business, and am broke till the pageant here [Troy, New York] is done and paid for. Bridges burned behind me, and all that sort of thing.

So I am writing personally to you to know when my annual contract can begin, and whether or not it is safe for me to make definite arrangements with my skeleton staff for the opening of the Department classes as announced in January. . . .

If we must have some deficit anyway, as we must in the first season or two, it's surely not worth while to risk losing the first choice people in order to make slight savings. . . .

House hunting in Chicago was unsuccessful, and Stevens could not even get the Chicago University High School people to answer his letters so had just about decided to send the children somewhere else.

The Institute responded immediately declaring the actual construction of the theatre began that week, that the department

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67 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, September, 1924.

68 Ibid.
would begin as planned, January 1, 1925, and that his salary began at once, with his September 1 check of $500 in the mail. Further, the Trustees authorized the appointment of a "general assistant [Howard Southgate] and . . . a costume design lady [Helen Forrest]."

With financial burdens eased and a nucleus of a faculty appointed, other issues arose. A publicity release regarding the association of the Goodman Theatre of the Chicago Art Institute with the University of Chicago caused a brief but tenuous edginess between the two institutions. In announcing their cooperation with the Goodman, University of Chicago's Publicity Director released the statement:

A new school of dramatic art, sponsored by the University of Chicago cooperating with the Art Institute will be opened this winter. . . . Classes are to commence January 5th in the Art Institute.  

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69 Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, September 12, 1924.

70 Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, September 24, 1924. A letter of genuine welcome from Alexander Dean, "teaching the arts of the theatre" at Northwestern University offered much support to Stevens. Letter from Alexander Dean to T. W. Stevens, October 19, 1924.

71 Letter from Henry Justin Smith, Assistant to the President, University of Chicago, to T. W. Stevens, December 10, 1924.
Mr. Goodman was upset, and Stevens, much incensed, called the University to task for the incorrect emphasis noted in the release. Stevens wrote Harshe that although the Publicity Director was at first "brash . . . [he] crawled down when [I] told him how matters really stood . . . " Stevens condemned the director saying that he had "thievishly and feloniously phrased his blurb so that the head line would inevitably give them [University of Chicago] the kudos." 72

The University officials apologized and even offered to initiate an extended project for the benefit of Goodman. They suggested the building up of a good collection of plays and materials on drama, looking forward to a "really notable dramatic collection [similar to that of] Harvard," 73 and wondered if more courses and "a larger plan" offered by the University of Chicago would aid the work of the Goodman Dramatic School. 74

With a minimum of administrative policies established and with a theatre still under construction, the Department of Drama, in association with the Chicago Art Institute, opened in January, 1925.

72 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, September, 1924.

73 Letter from John Manly to T. W. Stevens, November 26, 1924.

74 Ibid. No data disclose if the offer from the University of Chicago was accepted or rejected or, if so, why or how such an idea was executed.
With a skeletal staff and a non-specialized student body, Stevens was able to produce plays in old Fullerton Hall while recruiting needed faculty and repertory members. He wrote to Roman "Bud" Bohnen about a position in handling the crew and acting as well:

Are you still interested in the repertory game. We are getting up to the point where we can't wait any longer, and propose to start something here February 21st. . . .

We are going to give some performances in Fullerton Hall, beginning three weeks from next Saturday with Paolo and Francesca . . . We are gathering in some of our fellowship people for this first bill.

How do you feel about it? I should expect the man to handle the crew, except in the matter of lighting ([Arvid] Crandall will do that) and to see to the construction work generally. . . .

[Although] the job remains considerable . . . the place I am talking about for you is that of a regular actor in the company who has his duty in addition, just as Crandall has the lighting and Joe [Lazarovici] has the folk-dancing. Our budget is very limited, but I can get $400 for the balance of the season.75

Even the skeletal staff at Goodman was changing. Wallace Rice, who had been teaching voice and diction wrote Stevens:

I'm simply a bum teacher who hasn't had skill enough in eleven weeks [at Goodman] to get over one point striven for. . . .

So, unwillingly but after serious reflection, my mind's made up to quit and give you a chance at some policy

75 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Roman Bohnen in Dayton, Ohio, January 28, 1925.
and person who can teach English pronunciation in the Goodman Theatre as it should be taught—at least so somebody can learn something about it, as nobody has from me—not a dam thing.\(^\text{76}\)

Stevens remembered B. Iden Payne's recommendation of a Harriet Walker who would finish Tech that semester, but Payne's consideration of a place for Miss Walker with Goodman did not extend to the function of teaching diction. He suggested finding someone in Chicago.\(^\text{77}\) Stevens contacted Mary Agnes Doyle who accepted the position to teach voice and diction classes either "Wednesday morning or early afternoon" as she had her own Dramatic School in Chicago at the time.\(^\text{78}\)

In building his repertory company Stevens relied on Tech graduates. True to his statement that he set forth in a letter of August 2, 1924, Stevens took some "Carnegie drama graduates with him to Chicago to be the nucleus of his Goodman Theatre acting company there."\(^\text{79}\) Muriel Brown, back in Indianapolis, wrote

\(^{76}\) Letter from Wallace Rice to T. W. Stevens, January 28, 1925.

\(^{77}\) Letter from B. Iden Payne to T. W. Stevens, January 29, 1925.

\(^{78}\) Letter from Mary Agnes Doyle to T. W. Stevens, March 26, 1925.

\(^{79}\) Letter from T. W. Stevens to (no first name) Morgan, August 2, 1924.
"wondering whether or not there would be any opportunity . . . any place . . . [for her] to work in" the Goodman organization. 80

Also, Russell Spindler agreed to join the Goodman group in Stage Craft work. 81 And former student, Jimmy Church, wrote:

I really suppose I am a little late in writing for you have no doubt made your selection by now, but the fact that you had made the change was only a rumor until I talked to Mera [Harry Mera] the other day. I do hope you will know of something for I would like nothing better than to get back into the old work, especially under you. 82

The three Tech graduates then located in Indiana, Ohio, and New Mexico respectively joined the Goodman Theatre company along with Howard Southgate, Helen Forrest, Mary Agnes Doyle, Arvid Crandall, and Joe Lazarovici. Recruiting personnel and supervising construction of the theatre took much of Stevens' time, but he managed to speak to various organizations in Chicago and the surrounding area, wrote professional recommendations and opinions, arranged special performances, and taught classes.

80 Letter from Muriel Brown to T. W. Stevens, July 8, 1924.

81 Letter from Russell Spindler to T. W. Stevens, August 2, 1924.

82 Letter from Jimmy Church to T. W. Stevens, October 29, 1924. Stevens used Brown in Personal Technic, Spindler in Stage Craft, and Church in Make-Up courses.
For example, Maurice Block of the new "Community Playhouse" in Omaha, Nebraska sought a director through Stevens' help; also, a Mr. A. W. Newman pondered the possibility of finding a place for Gordon Craig at the Goodman where he could "give expression to his ideas;" Frederick Koch asked Stevens to speak at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Robert Harshe reminded Stevens he was to arrange a special performance of Man of Destiny by the repertory players at "eleven thirty the morning of Tuesday, April seventh in Fullerton Hall" for one hundred members of the Milwaukee Teachers' Association "on an art pilgrimage to Chicago."

However, these activities as well as many speaking dates such as the Chicago Woman's Aid luncheon on March 20, 1925, did not prevent Stevens from teaching as well as directing the first performances in Fullerton Hall at the Institute. The first production

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83 Letter from Maurice Block to T. W. Stevens, January 19, 1925.
84 Letter from A. W. Newman to T. W. Stevens, March 13, 1925. The letter was written at the suggestion of Kenneth MacGowan.
85 Telegram from Frederick Koch to T. W. Stevens, March 21, 1925.
86 Note from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, March 25, 1925.
87 Memorandum from Margaret Hammer to T. W. Stevens, March 16, 1925.
of the Department of Drama, not yet the Goodman Theatre, and presented by the newly formed Goodman Repertory Theatre, opened February 21, 1925, in Fullerton Hall. The play, *Paolo and Francesca* by Stephen Phillips, announced the onset of productions in the initial year. The program listed: Director, Thomas Wood Stevens; Stage Manager, Russell Spindler; Lights, Arvid Crandall; Costumes, Helen Forrest; Bookholder, Roberta Louden. The acting company included: Hubbard Kirkpatrick, Helen Forrest, Arvid Crandall, Eula Guy, Russell Spindler, Neal Caldwell, and Bess Johnson, all Tech graduates. 88

While the new theatre facility was still incomplete, Stevens began his production schedule. After *Paola and Francesca* other programs of short plays followed. Presented in Fullerton Hall during the spring of 1925 two additional bills showed variety in kinds of plays. The program of the second production, directed by Stevens and Southgate, April 4, 11, and 18, 1925, bore the title THREE SHORT PLAYS and included an original script and two continental ones:

- *The Day of the Diamond Pin* by Hubbard Kirkpatrick and Lawrence Gibson
- *The Bear* by Anton Tchekoff
- *The Man of Destiny* by George Bernard Shaw 89

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89 Program, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.
The final evening of plays, for the first term at Goodman, offered two American plays and one Shavian one. Presented May 2, 9, 11, 1925, the bill included:

- A Letter to Alice by Cora Jarrett
- The Dark Lady of the Sonnets by George Bernard Shaw
- Highways Cross by Thomas Wood Stevens.  

In the early presentations at the Institute the spring of 1925 Stevens attempted several new plays, a practice he followed throughout his career. Always anxious for untried scripts Stevens asked Eugene O'Neill if there was a chance that his play, The Fountain, "might be available for the opening of the Goodman Theatre" in

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90 Program, Volume 24, Stevens Collection. At this time Payne headed Carnegie Tech Department of Drama and Stevens wrote to him for criticism of Highways Cross. Correspondence shows that Payne liked the one act play but favored dropping one episode for it might "mislead the audience coming as it does at the beginning of the play, it seems as if it were going to be the main theme." He liked the atmosphere of the play and felt there must be a good deal of pictorial charm as well in production. Letter from B. Iden Payne to T. W. Stevens May 15, 1925. Stevens replied that he had a clue to some vital mistakes in the script one being that the cast "played into it, as one always does with a new and hasty thing, any number of things not noted in the script, some of which should actually be in the dialogue," Stevens injected a dozen lines "of the most obvious order though it can never be anything but a literary sophisticated play for special audiences . . . The more I think of it, the more I realize that it has been getting over here largely by Eula Guy's performance, which was extremely good." Letter from T. W. Stevens to B. Iden Payne, May 19, 1925. Stevens evidenced his ability for evaluating a production both the view of the playwright as well as the director. And as Payne said Stevens had the knack for knowing what was the right thing in production. Knight, p. 44; Interview with B. Iden Payne, April 22, 1949, Austin, Texas.
October. He described the physical plant with its technical innovations and the two playing companies, the Repertory and the Studio Group, and hoped that O'Neill would have his work completed soon so that Stevens could preview it. ⁹¹

The members of the Repertory Company serving as teachers as well as actors shaped themselves into a capable acting company with the early productions presented in Fullerton. Dedicated artists, the repertory members found a need for more active expression than even the classroom or the company offered. ⁹² And prior to the fall term and the dedication of the Goodman Theatre several of the company increased their theatrical experiences by working in other endeavors. Three members of the staff on fellowships at the Goodman, Kirkpatrick, Eula Guy and Ellen Lowe were released soon after the

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⁹¹ Letter from T. W. Stevens to Eugene O'Neill, May 5, 1925. There is no record of a reply from Mr. O'Neill, nor is there any mention of The Goodman Theatre every producing The Fountain.

⁹² There is an interesting memo in the files from Mr. Harshe. He stated: "There is a Trustees regulation against smoking in the institution. I will be glad if you will tell your assistants of the regulation, and if you have any general recommendation to make, I will be glad to bring it up . . . and have the application of this regulation carried over to the Goodman Theatre." Whether Stevens was one of the offenders was not mentioned, but Stevens was a chain smoker. Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, January 21, 1925; Interview with Peter Marroney, March 30, 1972, Tucson, Arizona.
last production in May to tour for the summer, and Neal Caldwell followed as soon as he completed his teaching. 93

During the summer Stevens, too, worked outside the Goodman with the Cincinnati Pageant 94 and with the Inter-Theatre Art Institute Workshop in New York. 95 To publicize the Goodman Theatre's official opening, Stevens, in addition to his forementioned activities, prepared catalogue information and spoke before various organizations regarding the Goodman Theatre, 96 the Art Extension Committee for Illinois, for one. He and Shaw discussed the details of Georgian furnishings for the theatre. In one instance, Shaw, attempting to decide on interior decorations, returned some sample swatches of possible curtain material to Stevens. Shaw noted:

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93 Letter from T. W. Stevens to Robert Harshe, May 8, 1925.
94 Letter from Robert Harshe to T. W. Stevens, May 25, 1925.
96 "From Remarks by Thomas Wood Stevens" Vol. 24, 1925. In his prepared remarks Stevens mentioned that the plan of the Goodman was new in America, and its interest to the Art Extension Committee "lies in the fact that it is available . . . for any community within easy travel of Chicago." He noted that for future productions they would be available to any stage in Illinois, and though it was impossible to transport the wagon stages and mechanical devices . . . "they could give the passion of a play" wherever that production might serve individual purposes.
I have lived with these samples for three of four days and believe that the brocatelle is more in keeping with the Georgian interior than the velour. I still believe we would be playing it safer to take a good red, but I am quite willing to accede to Mr. and Mrs. Goodman's wishes on either one of these samples . . . [and] we should now . . . take up the matter of the side curtains into the corridors. 97

Completing details for the theatre and organizing the formal dedication of the Goodman Theatre and the preparation of the academic schedule consumed most of the summer. Stevens formulated many press releases, announcements to the annual members of the Institute, catalogue descriptions of course and personnel, Art Institute Bulletins, and dedication remarks.

A press release noted:

The Goodman Theater will immediately, on its completion, become the home and the workshop of the new drama department of the Art Institute. This will combine the activities of a repertory theater with a professional training school. . . . [and] have the co-operation of the University of Chicago. 98

In addition the writer of the column described how Howard Shaw, architect, had studied modern European playhouses in order "to solve

97 Letter from Howard Shaw to T. W. Stevens, May 25, 1925.

98 Clipping, Chicago Evening Post, September, 1925. Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.
the problem of a practical working stage without the usual height: demanded by the varied work of repertory theatre."

Another newspaper pronouncement noted that "altho the theatre is small, seating only 750, . . . its equipment . . . make [s] possible infinite experimentation . . . from the technical angle," while of the company recruited from the professional stage, the article noted the members are "young people content with less salary, but who welcome the opportunity for experimental work." And director, Stevens, it added, had a "thoro knowledge of the theater, both from its theoretical and practical sides, having written and produced his own plays for over a period of twelve years plus."

Much space was given to describing the theatre's innovations. One reporter emphasized not only the architecture of the theatre, memorial gallery, Georgian design, grand stairway, vaulted aisles,

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99Ibid. The plaudits to Shaw received Stevens' agreement. In a letter to George Pierce Baker, who was moving to Yale and beginning a theatre there, Stevens wrote that Howard Shaw was "the first architect I have ever known who would really study the problems of the particular theatre from the special point of view of its uses, taking just as much interest in the practical and convenient grouping and function of the shops as in the making of an impressive foyer and auditorium. I didn't know there was anybody like that in his profession." Letter from T. W. Stevens to George Pierce Baker, January 10, 1925.

100Newspaper unknown, date not given, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.

101Ibid.
European style interior "with extra wide spaces between the rows . . ." [American design offered 34" between rows while the European plan allowed 42" between rows] but the technical plant too. The review in the Chicago Evening Post explained that without the usual height the method of operation at the Goodman needed a "great deal of extra room at the sides . . . and large shops for the building and painting of scenery and the construction and housing of properties, a switchboard of extreme flexibility . . . for the most modern effects in lighting . . . particularly for the lighting of the sky dome which will serve for all exterior settings by the addition of plastic foregrounds and a set of wagon stages . . ."\textsuperscript{102}

The inscription over the doorway to the theatre, a chiseled part of the structure itself, indicated the future policies of the Goodman Theatre. Taken from one of Kenneth Sawyer Goodman's plays, the inscription read, "To restore the old visions and to win the new," a statement which Stevens felt encompassed his views about the purposes of theatre in general and the Goodman in particular.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{102}Chicago Evening Post, September, 1925.

\textsuperscript{103}This inscription epitomized Stevens' beliefs of the Goodman Theatre. Many of his former colleagues congratulated him upon his latest endeavor, and one, Laura Sherry a member formerly of the Wisconsin Dramatic Society and presently working in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, wrote to him congratulating him on his fine theatre and the "glorious things" he planned. She also hoped he would attend "their" production of Antigone at the Pabst Theatre. She was still "lugging" in the theatre. Letter from Laura Sherry to T. W. Stevens, April 23, 1925.
In addition to the press releases which detailed the Goodman Theatre plant were announcements to members which informed them: (1) how to use the coupons, enclosed with their tickets, for admission to the coming performances of the Repertory Company, (2) the location of the theatre in relation to the location of the Institute, (3) the days of performances, (4) the opening bill, (5) possible future productions of the Repertory Company, and (6) the Studio productions. 104

The September Bulletin of the Institute included three pages of data about the new Goodman Theatre--the donor of the theatre, for whom the theatre was named, the plan of operation and use of the theatre, dedication date, and future productions. The first page, centered with an octogonalframed sketch of the Goodman Theatre apparently drawn by Stevens, described the theatrical background of Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, for whom the edifice was named. It said:

Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, for whom the Goodman Theatre was named, was born in 1883, graduated from Princeton in 1906, and died in November, 1918, while in the Naval service as Aide to Commandant Moffett at Great Lakes Station.

While at Princeton, Mr. Goodman wrote a considerable body of verse, some of which has been published, and won the Poetry Prize in 1904. After his graduation and return to Chicago, he took up

104 Announcement to Members concerning the Goodman Theatre, 1925. The full content is listed in Appendix B.
playwriting. Twelve of his short plays (the form in which his greatest interest lay, and in which he most excelled), have been published in the two volumes of his 'Quick Curtains' and 'More Quick Curtains.' He wrote a number of plays and masques with Thomas Wood Stevens . . . [and] Ben Hecht . . . More than thirty plays, written wholly or in part by Mr. Goodman, have been produced.

He was strongly interested in the entire work of the theater, in acting and production as well as in playwriting. Some of his scenery and costume designs were used by the repertory company which Mr. Iden Payne directed at the Playhouse in the season of 1912-1913. His best known plays . . . are "Dust of the Road," and "The Game of Chess."

In 1911 Mr. Goodman became a Governing Life Member of the Art Institute. He served also on the Committee on Prints and Drawings, and, with Clarence Buckingham, did much to establish and develop the Department of Prints.

With such interests, and so great a talent in the dramatic field, it is specially fitting that the monument of Kenneth Sawyer Goodman should be a theater, and that it should be in the Art Institute, where he gave the most generous and valued volunteer service for a number of years. 105

The article announced that the formal dedication of the Memorial Theater had been set for the evening of "Tuesday, October twentieth." 106 The first public performance by the company was to take place on Thursday, October 22, 1925. Following those events

105 Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago, September, 1925. p. 66.

106 Ibid.
the theater will be occupied during the season by two acting groups, the Repertory, composed of actors and actresses of approved professional experience, a number of whom also act as instructors, and the Studio, consisting of students in the Drama Department. The professional company will play regularly on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings and Thursday matinees. Productions by the Studio group will be announced from time to time. A series of performances of ballet given by the Chicago Allied Arts, Incorporated, under the direction of Messrs. John Alden Carpenter, Eric Delamarter and Adolf Bolm, will begin in the Goodman Theater with the programme of November first. 107

Of further interest to the Institute members who received the Bulletin was the dedication programme which was to consist of three short plays by Kenneth Goodman "in whose memory the theater building has been presented by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William O. Goodman." 108 The first public performance, and all Repertory performances for the balance of the month of October, was to be Galsworthy's 'The Forest.' "

The September Bulletin noted that other plays for the first season were to come from a list which included Shaw's 'Heartbreak House,' Molière's 'Don Juan,' Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' and Georg Kaiser's 'Gas,' "a recent play of the Continental expressionistic type." 109 Stevens' selection of two

107 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
108 Ibid., p. 67.
109 Ibid.
classics, a modern expressionism play, and "a number of new
American plays to be produced for the first time" demonstrated
his policy of restoring old visions and winning the new as inscribed
over the entrance to the Goodman Theater.

Performing in the Repertory Company were artists who had
been seen in the previous season at Fullerton Hall. The personnel
included Eula Guy, Helen Forrest, Ellen Lowe, Bess Kathryn
Johnson, Howard Southgate, Hubbard Kirkpatrick, Neal Caldwell,
Josef Lazarovici, Arvid Crandall, Russell Spindler and newcomers
Walton Tyre [sic Pyre] and Mary Agnes Doyle. Furthermore, ac-
cording to policies adhered to at Tech, Stevens had invited notable
guest artists to appear during the season. Directing the regular
productions would be Thomas Wood Stevens and Howard Southgate.

In order to attend productions members of the Art Institute
were to receive eight coupons "which may be applied on the price of
tickets for the theater." Coupons were good for either fifty cents
on each one dollar ticket for Repertory performances or the purchase
of eight tickets to any one individual play. The Bulletin explained

\[110\text{Ibid.}\]

\[111\text{Ibid. Kane in "Are We All Met?" includes in addition to the forementioned the names of Art Smith, Bernard Ostertag, and Roman Bohnen, p. 268.}\]

\[112\text{Ibid.}\]
that studio productions were "fifty cents to the public and twenty-five cents to members, without the use of coupons. Performances given by outside organizations were to be open only to ticket holders who secured tickets from the respective producing organizations."

The advent of a theatre under the auspices of the Art Institute was so wide a departure from the "established esthetic and educational activities of the Art Institute that" Stevens included a plan of its operation for the members. Stevens wrote:

The basic idea is to give to the membership and the public an opportunity to see plays which could not in the usual course of theatrical entertainment, be presented; just as the passing exhibitions give the opportunity for the study and enjoyment of many pictures and pieces of sculpture that would not otherwise be seen. 113

Stevens noted that many excellent plays were given for "only brief engagements and revived only at long intervals; . . . some are available only in print, and are never presented to their audience as the authors intended they should be--by living actors in a theater." 114 Stevens planned that the Repertory Company would give, each season,

as many good old plays as can be adequately produced, allowing time for the performance as well

of about an equal number of new plays, any one of which may disclose elements of lasting interest. 115

Stevens hoped the Goodman Theater audience would come upon a classic which had not been seen for years "or a play by one of the important modern authors who are accepted by critics but unregarded in the commercial market. . . ." 116 The September Bulletin also offered Stevens' goals: to give an honest interpretation to the work of the author; to give each work a pleasant and suitable setting; to offer plays of real life as well as ones in which imagination escapes into realms of poetry and romance; to promulgate no special style or type of drama; and, to foster an alert and creative audience.

In addition to explaining the plans for the Repertory Company, Stevens described the Studio Group as another side of the work of Drama Department. The members of the Studio were to be young people who had, according to Stevens,

come for a stern professional training in the arts and crafts of the theater, in acting, playwriting, and producing. The performances of the Studio group will be, for the present at least, more highly specialized, but here too a breadth of experience in many types of plays must ultimately be attained.

115 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
Their productions, at slightly more deliberate intervals, . . . will be devoted more intensively to the study of the accepted plays of the past, a factor in the programs of dramatic entertainment offered by the Theater. 117

The final remarks in "Kenneth Sawyer Goodman" article in the September Bulletin indicated that Stevens wanted to present plays for as wide an audience as possible. He concluded:

Both the Repetory and Studio groups will give, occasionally, performances of plays and special interest to audiences composed of the children of members and of children from the schools of the city. At the holiday season, in particular, it is contemplated that the two companies join forces to present an elaborate production suited to the tastes of younger audiences.

While the September Bulletin of the Art Institute described the general plan of the Drama Department of the Institute for its members, the Fall Brochure, 1925, of the Institute defined the specific curriculum for interested students. In the Brochure publication Stevens presented a profile of the work to be completed and the particular courses offered. The courses in the Dramatic Arts were designed to provide "a limited number of students a thorough professional training in the entire work of the theatre. . . ."118

Instructions were specific:

117Ibid., p. 69.

118Art Institute Fall Brochure, 1925; Department of Drama, p. 29, Vol. 23, Stevens Collection.
Admission is by competitive technical tests. Students will come to Chicago for these tests entirely on their own responsibility; but only those who are at least eighteen years of age, and have completed a standard four-year high school course or its equivalent are eligible. Since it is planned that some of the courses will be given in cooperation with the University of Chicago, students must be prepared to pass the usual entrance requirements of the University. 119

The drama course was designed to be completed in three years, but an additional year plan, leading to a degree, was envisioned. Work previously done in parallel courses of collegiate grade was to be granted advanced standing; however, work in the purely technical "branches" was to be granted advanced standing if determined so by a "jury of the technical faculty at the end of the first term." 120

The Fall Brochure, 1925, described the 750 seat auditorium, the stage with a great "plaster-dome," modern wagon stages, complete, up-to-date, lighting system, extensive scenery and properties shops, costume-making and wardrobe rooms, scene studio, and the various class and rehearsal rooms necessary for numerous and frequent productions. All students were required to carry on work in the various stage crafts while participating in

119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
productions and related academic studies. The Public Performance section of the Drama Department catalogue specified that the "Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre will be operated as an important and independent art theatre" with the Repertory, composed of professional personnel and advanced students, appearing from time to time and the Studio, "for those in earlier stages of training."\textsuperscript{121}

The Entrance Requirements section stated:

Classes will be limited in membership. It is therefore desirable for interested persons to correspond with the Dean, presenting their qualifications. The filing of a formal application upon blanks supplied by the School is necessary. Provisional acceptance and notification to appear for the technical test will be given to qualified applicants. The technical test for the entering class of the school year 1925-1926 will be given in the week beginning September 21, 1925, and all candidates will be required to spend the entire week in the work.\textsuperscript{122}

The academic term for 1925-1926 began September 29 and ran to December 19, 1925. Ten courses were offered and jointly taught by ten staff members. The courses and instructors were:

PERSONAL TECHNIC
Interpretation, gesture, and the use of the speaking voice; pantomime and diction.

Mr. Stevens, Mr. Southgate,
Miss Doyle, Miss Brown

\textsuperscript{121}\textsuperscript{122}Ibid., p. 30.
DANCING
   English Folk Dancing is required of all students during the first year; period and inter- 
   pretative dancing later.
   Mr. Lazarovici

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE
   The major work of all students; classical and modern plays.
   Mr. Stevens, Mr. Southgate and members of the Repertory Company

SCENE DESIGN AND SCENE PAINTING
   Design of scenery, making scale models; the painting of actual scenery for the stage.
   Mr. Iannelli

STAGE CRAFT
   Construction and the manual branches of the work of the theatre; required.
   Mr. Spindler

LIGHTING
   Theories of stage lighting, and the actual operation of the switchboard; required.
   Mr. Crandall

DRAMATIC COMPOSITION
   A course for those who show special abilities in playwriting; Students' plays reaching a sufficiently high standard will be produced in the Theatre.
   Mr. Stevens

HISTORY OF THE DRAMA
   Lecture course on the history of the theatre as an institution; its architectural forms, production methods and traditions; reading of plays.
   Mr. Stevens

MAKE-UP
   Straight and character make-up, theory and practice.
   Mr. Church
SURVEY OF ART HISTORY
Course is required by the Lower School of the
Art Institute.

Miss Gardner

This curriculum devised to train young theatre aspirants
became operative September 29, 1925. But the day Stevens had
anticipated for almost twenty years was the dedication of the Good-
man Theatre. The date, October 20, 1925, was for Stevens the
culmination of years of dreaming, planning, and working. As early
as 1908 he had dedicated himself to a career in the theatre. His
activities with the Robertson Company in Chicago, his theatrical
pioneering with the Wisconsin Dramatic Society in Madison, his
creation of the first department of theatre, in association with a
university, at Carnegie Institute of Technology at Pittsburgh, and
his multiple artistic endeavors in the related disciplines of writing,
painting, sketching, designing, and directing pageants over a period
of seventeen years were to see fruition in the opening of the Kenneth
Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre.

The Goodman Theatre was to be an art theatre rather than
a commercial market. As Stevens stated in the September Bulletin
of the Institute, the Goodman would present a wide range of plays
from the classics to the new, untried ones. Free of the pressures

123Ibid.
of commercialism and box office receipts, Stevens visualized the Goodman conducting "experiments in scenery designing, lighting, costuming and acting such as are impossible in the commercial theaters and for which the young community theaters of the country are not yet equipped."\(^{124}\)

In his letter of acceptance, May 14, 1924, Stevens had explicitly stated that the plays to be produced were to be examples of "dramatic art." At forty-five Stevens was a "maturing young man--mature in experience as artist, playwright, teacher of the stage arts--young in outlook, keenly aware of the progress that is being made in . . . theaters in America and on the continent of Europe, enthusiastic as to the future of the [Goodman] theater."\(^{125}\)

According to C. J. Bulliet in the \textit{Chicago Evening Post}, January 20, 1925, all sorts of plays were to be tried.

Shakespeare, of course, will have a place in the repertory. There will be other English classics and semi-classics. There will be translations, too, from Molière and the other French and Continental masters. Current Broadway hits will be tried occasionally when arrangements can be made; and those other New York and London plays of artistic worth, but of so doubtful appeal to the masses that producers are reluctant to


\(^{125}\)Ibid.
risk road tours. Original plays, too, will be staged, some from the school's own classes in playwriting, some from outside sources.

In addition to the idea of an artistic theater, Stevens was able to realize his dream of a repertory company with a "nucleus of ten players of professional experience, [most of them] young actors and actresses trained by Stevens at Carnegie Tech, who went later to Broadway and made good, not as stars, but as players who gave good account of themselves in more or less important roles . . . ."126 The ten experienced players would, furthermore, be doing "post-graduate" work in "fellowships" provided at first by friends of the dramatic arts and later by "self-sustaining funds derived from the presentation of plays."127

In addition to their association with the professional actors, the newer students were to receive academic training. The Goodman was offering

Everything that goes into the making of a stage play from the moment the germ originates in the mind of the dramatist until the last curtain falls . . . .128

126Ibid.

127Ibid. These "Fellows" would come to Chicago for a year and would play many varied parts. In association with them the newer students in the department would be trained. In this manner Stevens hoped to build up a stock and repertory company that would be permanent and perpetual.

128Ibid.
Bulliet, in the Chicago Evening Post, January 20, 1925, cited classes in designing and building scenery, training actors, writing plays, staging, production, directing, and costuming enhanced by the actual participation and doing. He said: "Stage hands, even, will be taught to shift the scenes in short order--timed to the second."

The Goodman Theatre, built at a cost of approximately $386,000, surpassed every other theatre in the United States, "perhaps the world," in lighting equipment for attaining special lighting effects on the stage. According to Stevens:

There will be all the 'circuits' and special sources of light known to the up-to-date commercial theaters besides some specially devised sources. . . .

In the past few months, some experiments have been made in Europe and duplicated in America obtaining light, not from so many electric bulbs of this color or that, but from the mixing in varying proportions of lights from pure blue, green and red sources. . . . [Stevens] employed this method in one of the last plays he gave in Pittsburg . . . As the play progressed from light comedy to tragic gloom the 'psychological atmosphere' [changed] by deepening his mixture of light from gay amber to a purple velvety black.

Planned and designed as a working theatre, the Goodman possessed scene shops, costume and wardrobe facilities, small and large

129 Ibid.
130 Ibid.
rehearsal rooms, dressing rooms, a Green Room, oval (elliptical) stage proper, plaster dome ceiling over the stage, and wagon stages.

The auditorium evidenced Georgian decoration; two side aisles, curtained entrances, continentally-spaced rows of seats, and a well-raked floor permitted a capacity audience of 750 to have a comfortable view of the playing area.

Stevens' dream of an artistic theatre had become an actuality. The Goodman combined the newest and best equipped theatre building with a trained, professional repertory company, able to perpetuate itself among the students who studied the academic offerings of the Drama Department of the Chicago Art Institute and gained practical experience working in the Repertory and Studio productions, free to interpret and present productions of artistic worth, old and new. And on October 20, 1925, the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre opened its doors to the members of the Chicago Art Institute. And, according to C. J. Bulliet,

If the dreams that accompany the erection of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theater . . . are realized, Chicago will become one of the important producing centers of the globe.131

131 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

STEVENS AND THE GOODMAN THEATRE, 1925-1928

The opening of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Theatre was a memorable event for Chicagoans. The press covered the affair in detail. Members of the Institute and patrons of the arts came to wonder at and enjoy the fabulous building and the first theatrical production. Manuscript notes prepared by Stevens for the Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago, October, 1925, in anticipation of the dedication of the new theatre, reiterated remarks about Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, to whom the theatre was dedicated, his contributions to and interest in the theatre made previously in the Institute's September Bulletin.

In the later article Stevens detailed the Goodman Theatre as almost too good to be true. He wrote:

The building itself is mostly underground. Because the Chicato Art Institute lies in Grant Park, between Michigan Boulevard and the lake, and an ordinance forbids any new building to project more than a few feet above the ground level, the earth was hollowed out for this playhouse, of which one sees only an austere stone parapet from the boulevard.

The constraint in vertical space given to the auditorium to whose foyer one descends by a broad staircase, [is of] very beautiful proportions, widening its width, and

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cutting down its height. The same constraint has called for the greatest ingenuity in design from architect and director, in construction and arrangement of equipment, as there is almost no room overhead; and with sliding stages and specially designed machinery they have made this unique stage a technical miracle.¹

The magnificence of the subterreanean structure would be, in all likelihood, "an instant success."² Not only the completeness and beauty of the theatre but the paintings planned for display in the gallery were to be both spectacular and priceless. In anticipation of the dedication the donor and senior Goodman, on an eastern trip, wrote to Stevens suggesting that for the evening of October twentieth his special paintings ought to be hung in the main gallery hall.

Our full length portrait of Mrs. Siddons is at the Institute, and the Institute has I think some theatrical portraits chief among them the Fechin portrait of Lilian Gish. This may be going into the fall exhibit but it can be moved into the exhibit when the time comes and returned afterwards. We also have at the house that I can send down . . . portraits of Kendal and Booth.³

Although the last minute arrangements and final touches for the dedication of the Goodman Theatre were not completed until

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²Whitford Kane, Are We All Met?, p. 266.

³Letter from W. O. Goodman to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 3, 1925.
October, the operational policies and purposes of the Goodman were finalized almost two years previously when the Theatre committee of the Art Institute received Stevens' letter accepting the directorship of the Drama Department and the Goodman Theatre. The steering committee and Stevens had agreed that the goal of the Goodman was a theatre dedicated to artistic ventures, a theatre staffed with professionally experienced personnel working to present varied bills for its audiences and its students who came to the Institute and Goodman to be trained in all phases of theatrical endeavors.

Perhaps the crucial and deciding factor that swayed Stevens to leave Carnegie and return to Chicago to head the Goodman was the fact that, finally, he was to be in a position to attempt plays free of commercial demands. Goodman was the realization of his dream - a theatre free of box office limitations, a theatre that could experiment with new as well as tried-and-true plays, a theatre that was dedicated to and motivated by an overwhelming sense that the theatre has a duty, an obligation, and the right to share with its viewers the very best artistic portrayals of the great dramatic pieces of the world.

This idea of an artistic theatre had been Stevens' dream since his youthful years in Chicago. Now at the helm of the Goodman, sponsored by the Art Institute of Chicago which brought the best possible art works to the public, Stevens anticipated the crystallization
of his ideal, to present the best possible art theatre to the public.

Stevens recognized, however, that the control of the play-house was vested in a committee chosen from trustees of the institute not particularly sympathetic to art theatre. This committee was a group of businessmen whose qualifications for supervising lay in the fact that they were trustees, and Stevens cautioned the group to be patient. He pointed out some essential facts about the Goodman venture. From the beginning he explained

the history of past experiments and warned the committee that what he wanted to accomplish could not be done overnight. . . . The institution . . . the repertory company could not be expected to bear fruit for a good many years . . . . The Goodman [would] need time, energy, and money before it could hope to be an achievement. 'Judge the theatre's record ten years from now, and then decide its merit.'

The Institute Committee agreed with him and said that was to be expected. 4

The success of Goodman's artistic theatre policy depended on three major factors: 1) time, 2) freedom of expression, and 3) support. Of these factors the item which concerned the director most was financial support. Stevens reminded the Committee that Goodman was a noncommercial venture, almost a kind of educational theatre whose aim was to offer productions of universal worth and not primarily to make money. Just as the Institute displayed different

4Kane, pp. 266-67.
paintings as a means of broadening the scope and experience of the
viewers so Stevens asked the Institute to support his similar plan
to present various kinds of dramatic pieces which would develop
astute and critical audiences. Stevens' maxim was, "Wisely and
slow. They stumble who run fast."5

Such an artistic theatre should succeed if founded on firm
commitments, financial support, and talent. The Drama Depart-
ment of the Institute would not only offer academic theatre training
to develop new artists in the field, but the Repertory Company, a
nucleus of actors and actresses who were trained, experienced,
disciplined, and dedicated, would offer professional guidance. The
director himself was a mature and knowledgable expert in the theatre
who had gained a reputation for professional artistry and excellence.
The theatre structure, beautifully designed with the latest tech-
nical equipment, offered experience in practical execution and
creativity. Hopefully the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial
Theatre, as planned, would advance and expand the institution of
art theatre in America.

DEDICATION AND THE 1925-1926 SEASON

A formal invitation announced the dedication to Institute
members:

5Ibid., p. 271.
The Trustees of
The Art Institute of Chicago
cordially invite you to be present at
the Dedication of the
Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre
on the evening of
Tuesday, the Twentieth of October
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-Five
at Eight-Thirty P.M.

Please reply before October
Twelfth Using the Enclosed
Card in Order that Seats
May Be Reserved for You.6

The "programme" for the dedicatory festivities noted the
important personages to be present: Mr. Potter Palmer, President
of the Art Institute, presiding, Mr. Thomas Wood Stevens, Head of
Drama Department, Institute, Mr. Robert Harshe, Director of the
Art Institute, and Mr. B. Iden Payne, Head of Department of Drama,
Carnegie Institute of Technology.7 Music for the evening was
furnished by the Symphony Players of Chicago. Also, an announce-
ment at the bottom of the "programme" credits stated:

The theatre will be opened to the public on the evening
of Thursday, October twenty-second, with the pre-
miere in America of 'The Forest' by John Galsworthy. The Repertory Company will play, during the season,
beginning October twenty-second, on Thursday, Friday
and Saturday evenings, with a Friday afternoon mat-
inee at 2:30 p.m. The plays will be chosen from a
list covering a wide range; some works of established

6Copy of Dedication Invitation, Vol. 24, Stevens
Collection.

7Ibid.
authors; some revivals of old plays, and some new works produced for the first time. They will include selections from the following list, together with three new American plays not yet ready for announcement:

The Romantic Young Lady  Sierra
Don Juan  Molière
Gas  Georg Kaiser
The Tower of Nesle  Dumas
Heartbreak House  Shaw
The School of Princesses  Benavente
Rails  Southgate
A Midsummer Night's Dream  Shakespeare

Although the season's list of possible productions did not include any plays of Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, the bill for the dedication ceremonies was three one acts by young Goodman. Stevens selected those three because he thought they illustrated Goodman's talent in dramatic writing. As Stevens noted in the preface to *Quick Curtains*, a book edited by Stevens and dedicated to the memory of his friend Kenneth:

Mr. Goodman's technical interest was always in the short play - the single act of cumulative and clearly focused effect. His vivid sense of character in action, and the most trenchant speech to express that character, commanded his imagination.9

Stevens felt that Goodman worked the veins of melodrama and of artificial comedy for definite and instant consumption. But even in these,


It was always the character speaking; his favorite method of writing fully then cutting mercilessly gave, in the end, his personal selection of what the characters said . . . with a swift, crisp, realistic view.  

The three Goodman plays were: "Back of the Yards," "The Green Scarf," and "The Game of Chess." The cast for "Back of the Yards" included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Priest</td>
<td>Walton Pyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Police Sergeant</td>
<td>Russell Spindler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Boy</td>
<td>Neal Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy's Mother</td>
<td>Mary Agnes Doyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Girl</td>
<td>Eula Guy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The final presentation, "The Game of Chess," a melodrama in Russia before the Revolution, had a cast of four:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexis Alexandrovitch</td>
<td>Howard Southgate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boris Ivanovitch Shamrayeff</td>
<td>Josef Lazarovici</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine</td>
<td>Arvid Crandall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footman</td>
<td>Edward Robbin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stevens and Howard Southgate directed the Repertory Company in the dedicatory presentation, and the staff included: C. E. Wilder, Manager, Russell Spindler, Stage Manager, Arvid Crandall, Lighting, Lighting.

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10 Ibid.

11 Dedication Programme. "The Game of Chess" was produced by B. Iden Payne under the auspices of the Chicago Theatre Society at the Fine Arts Theatre, November 18, 1913, with the following cast: Alexandrovitch, Walter Hampden, Shamrayeff, Whitford Kane, Constantine, T. W. Gibson, and Footman, Howard Plinge. Quick Curtains, p. 32.
Helen Forrest, Costumes, Charles Schlesinger, Assistant Stage Manager, Barney (Bernard) Ostertag, Properties, and Leslie Marzolf, Scene Design.\textsuperscript{12}

Theatre buffs, colleagues, former students, and friends sent their good wishes for the opening of the new theatre. The Cleveland Playhouse, under the direction of former Carnegie student Frederic McConnell, wired congratulations and "many good wishes for success."\textsuperscript{13} Hubert Osborn, at one time with Stevens at Carnegie, sent good wishes and the "Tech spirit."\textsuperscript{14} The Pasadena Community Play House, under Gilmore Brown, wired "Best wishes on the opening of the Goodman Memorial Theatre and to you personally on your splendid achievement in the past and in the future for the good of the American Theatres."\textsuperscript{15} An unsigned wire from the Neighborhood Playhouse conveyed best wishes for an auspicious opening.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{13}Wire from Cleveland Playhouse to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 20, 1925.

\textsuperscript{14}Wire from Hubert Osborn to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 20, 1925.

\textsuperscript{15}Wire from Gilmore Brown to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 20, 1925.

\textsuperscript{16}Wire from The Neighborhood Play House to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 20, 1925.
while Marion Gering of the Meyerhold Theatre in Moscow and then in New York City sent a telling wire, "Clear to path one who opens a middle west art theatre highway."\(^7\)

A chronologically detailed description of the dedication events cannot be presented, but a letter of appreciation from Marjorie A. Best, First Vice President of the Drama League of America, and an article in the *Chicago Herald and Examiners* offer some idea of the evening. Best wrote:

> Ever since that beautifully satisfying evening last week, I have been meaning to write and give you my heart-felt congratulations on the occasion of the culmination of your dreams. How very happy you must be to see them all coming true and how it must rejoice your soul to have it all at your feet again in this city where you made your dramatic beginnings - the beautiful Theatre, unlimited equipment and opportunity to attempt anything you desire. I am so glad over it all and earnestly wish you the greatest possible joy in the working out of your vision.\(^8\)

The *Chicago Herald and Examiners* "Society, by the Dowager" felt there was an "ephemeral something about the dedication of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theater . . . that makes a description of it seem dull and lifeless."\(^9\) According to

\(^{17}\)Wire from Marion Gering to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 22, 1925.

\(^{18}\)Letter from Marjorie A. Best to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 30, 1925.

\(^{19}\)"Society," *Chicago Herald and Examiners*, October 21, 1925.
the Dowager, there was no sense of funereal proceedings but rather a cheerful poise and words of warm feeling from the late Lieutenant Goodman's parents and wife. The two small Goodman girls, children of the deceased Goodman, wore "little green taffeta-hooded capes" as they sat with their mother and grandparents in the center of the house.  

It was the theatre house, however, that received the attention of the writer. She noted that the theatre was exquisite beyond belief and "modern in the best sense."  

Down a marble stairway one goes from the one-story entrance... to a very handsome foyer, hung with precious tapestries and decorated last night with blooming rose trees. The theater is not too large, and its panelled walls of light walnut give it that 'intimate' little theater look that is not only smart and cosy, but probably accounts for the almost perfect acoustics.

Four huge French chandeliers with crystal prisms light it brightly, and in niches in the walls busts of Shakespeare, Molière and other masters of the drama look solemnly down. A curtain of shimmering metal cloth covers a still handsomer one of brocade. And, as is the modern way, there are no center or side aisles, but each row of seats gives out into the hall-way. And praise be; the seats are comfortable and permit of a reasonable amount of lounging.

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
Although the theatre structure was praised, there seemed to be no critiques of the production. Perhaps, since the dedication program was not a totally public performance emphasis focused on the building and the dedicatory presentations. Remarks included those by Potter Palmer, Thomas Wood Stevens, Robert Harshe, and B. Iden Payne, colleagues who had known Kenneth Sawyer Goodman and spoke "as warm friends speak of the friend that is gone."²³

After the official dedication and opening performance at the Goodman Theatre, Stevens, the Repertory Company, and the Studio Group began their schedule of regular productions. Although possible selections had been listed in the Dedication Programme, the 1925-1926 bill differed from the announced offerings. The productions for the first season were:

**REPERTORY COMPANY**

"The Forest" by John Galsworthy  
*American Premiere*  
October 22, 24, November 14, 1925  
Director, Stevens

"The Romantic Young Lady" by Martinez Sierra  
Translated by Granville-Barker  
November 19, 1925, opening  
Director, Stevens

"An Heir at Large" by Mary Aldis  
December 17, 1925, opening  
Director, Stevens

²³Ibid.
"Gas" by Georg Kaiser
American Premiere
January 14, 1926, opening
Guest Director, Marion Gering

"Everyman"
March 14, 1926, opening
Directors, Redmond Flood and Stevens

"The Tragedy of Nan" by John Masefield
March 24, April 12, 1926
Director, Mrs. J. Elliott Jenkins

"The Man of Destiny" and "Don Juan" by Shaw and Molière
April 15, 1926, opening
Translator of "Don Juan" Stevens
Director, Stevens

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" by Shakespeare
May 20, 1926, opening
Director, Whitford Kane

The Studio group's performance for the season was "The Golden Apple" staged as a production for children on December 12, 1925. An additional Repertory production of "Juno and the Paycock" was called Goodman's "New Year's gift to Chicago."

The Goodman playbill for the first season indicated Stevens was following his plan to offer tried-and-true as well as new plays. Furthermore, he utilized the talents of visiting art-theatre directors and presented premiere showings of continental works. Apparently

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Stevens' efforts were both appreciated and panned, for Chicago reporters wrote both complimentary and uncomplimentary commentaries.

Galsworthy's "The Forest" received detailed criticism from critics Ashton Stevens of the Chicago Herald and Examiner and Charles Collins of the Chicago Evening Post. Stevens contradicted the Herald's "Society by the Dowager" as to the acoustics of the Goodman. Of "The Forest" production he felt the acoustics "will have to be improved, sound seeming to lose itself in pockets."

Critic Stevens commented:

> Although the Repertory group consists of professionals and semipros . . . they are not great actors by any means, but they don't seem to be half-baked amateurs either. Bar a tendency to intone . . . and to make a rather solemn business of walking . . . they are . . . a likely band.

The women of the Repertory Company he found rather exciting. Particularly did Ashton Stevens note the talent of Eula Guy. Her gracefulness added weight "in bronze" to a play which is inclined to be "static." But, he added:

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26 Ashton Stevens, "Galsworthy's 'Forest' At the Goodman," Chicago Herald and Examiner, October 23, 1925.

27 Ibid.
I for one approve the liberal spirit of Thomas Wood Stevens, the directing head of the theater and the school, for permitting Miss Guy to roll an eye and swing a hip and flash a smile and make first-night hardlings such as you and me forget that we had not bought our seats at Couthoul's.28

He advised his readers to "put the Goodman on your theater list. I advise you to see it as an all but perfect playhouse. The play is interesting, too, and gorgeously lowbrow for Galsworthy."29

Critic Charles Collins felt the Goodman's production of "The Forest" did not need the support of the press. "It is able to stand by itself. It is good."30 Collins summed up his feeling:

As a performance by the faculty and students of a dramatic school, this interpretation of a play which placed severe demands upon its cast and its stage director is quite remarkable.

'The Forest" was done so well by the Goodman group, professors and disciples . . . that one got the thrill and irony of the drama without worrying over the limitations of its players. A potent illusion was evoked. As they say on Randolph street, this show went over.31

28Ibid.

29Ibid.


31Ibid.
Collins, too, was disturbed by the poor acoustics and mentioned that "lobby conversation between acts brought out the fact . . . that bewilderment prevailed because the dialog could not be clearly heard."\(^{32}\) Feeling that the acoustic problem could be overcome Collins clearly was impressed by the overall production, Eula Guy as the half-caste Arab girl, and the famous sky-dome "the first in American, perhaps--that gave such a persuasive and extensive firmament[sic] that one wondered occasionally, in viewing these vast blue African horizons, where was the dark and terrible jungle that doomed explorers so greatly dreaded."\(^{33}\)

Both Ashton Stevens and Charles Collins were impressed by the production, but Collins mentioned particularly the sky-dome that was detailed by Donald Lawder in *The New York Times*, October 11, 1925. As Lawder noted:

> The most modern of ideas in technical stage design have been incorporated in the construction of this theatre. Over the entire back wall of the stage extends a great curved shell of plaster. Along the base of this half-dome is a trench filled with lighting equipment designed to give to the plaster surface the effect of a sky under varying effects of day and night, sunlight or storm.

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\(^{32}\)Ibid.

\(^{33}\)Ibid.
The sky will take the place of the usual painted sky in drop curtains, landscape effects being obtained by placing objects, horizons, trees, buildings or the like against the lighted background.

The sky-dome requires new methods for the rapid changing of interiors. It does not allow of the usual gridiron and fly gallery. Movable floors . . . or 'wagon stages' are prepared at the sides and wheeled into place when the given scene is required with the furniture and properties in place. 34

Collins concluded that the ability to alter scenes so rapidly made the "eight episodes into which Galsworthy has divided his play roll along without delays." 35

The Goodman's American premiere of "The Forest" received special coverage in a feature article in the Chicago Daily News. Of particular interest was a picture of Eula Guy talking backstage with the African explorer, Herbert Bradley, who supervised the "atmospheric effects" used in the play. 36

Of the next production, "The Romantic Young Lady," the reporters were less complimentary. Apparently the basic flaws of


36 Chicago Daily News, November 13, 1925.
the Spanish piece were Granville-Barker's translation and the leaden-like interpretation of the company. O. L. Hall wrote:

'The Romantic Young Lady' serves well enough the needs of students, but it serves also to lead the public to infer that the repertoire company at the Goodman theater is a group of neophytes, rather than a band of professionals. This sort of thing won't do, of course. If the Goodman Theater company is to play an important part in the cultural life of this city it will have to alter its course . . . . The effect of a play of this kind, an inconsequential mediocrity at best, depends upon the way of doing it. 37

In agreement with Hall, Charles Collins less critical, nevertheless, noted that there were some flaws here and there. He felt "the performance, as a whole, does not sustain the fluency and ripple that the play demands." 38 Reviewer Stevens continually had to remind himself to "put yourself in the atmosphere of the play; think and feel chastely, primly Spanish." 39 Apparently, the three critics, Hall, Collins, and Stevens, felt that a lighthearted easiness


39Ashton Stevens, "Trustful Spanish Comedy at the New Goodman," Chicago Herald and Examiner, November 20, 1925. Stevens overheard a taxi driver call the "smart little subway theater-the Tom Sawyer Theater." The term may have been a blend of Thomas "Tom" Wood Stevens and Kenneth "Sawyer" Goodman.
needed for the comedy was missing. But actresses received special mention: Eula Guy's role was overdone prettily, said Collins and Stevens, while Hall felt Helen Forrest's role was the only one that achieved a likeness of nature in her role. Severely Hall concluded:

Comedies of this kind require direction of the most sophisticated kind, and acting that has never a sign of strain, of effort, or mere mummering. A play of this kind must be tossed about as lightly as thistle-down carried on a summer breeze. The playing at the Goodman is leaden when it is not obviously inflated... I write of this ambitious enterprise in the friendliest spirit and with ardent hope that, considering its work, it will become the most significant and influential of our playhouses. Just now the players need to be told the unvarnished truth, and the truth is, they are not doing well.  

The third production at the Goodman, "An Heir at Large," by Mary Aldis, was a dramatization of a cartoon story by John T. McCutcheon. Called "an experiment in quaintness" the Goodman presentation was "a new species of the infinite and variable drama; a pen-and-ink comedy." According to reviewer Charles Collins,

40 O. L. Hall, "Speaking of Plays and Players." Stevens' limitations in directing comedy as noted by B. Iden in an earlier chapter may have been the play's weakness.

41 Charles Collins, "Goodman Players Experiment with Cartoon Comedy," Chicago Evening Post, December 18, 1925.
"An Heir at Large" presented the Goodman with a manuscript that allowed an amusing stunt in stagecraft.

'An Heir at Large,' as journalism, was a reflection in sketches and letter press, of the influence of the eminent Mr. McGuffey, who compiled the famous readers in the era of the little red school house. The play that Mrs. Aldis has evoked from the pictures and their text catches that tone quite accurately, and the stage direction of Thomas Wood Stevens has re-enforced it ingeniously.

The proscenium is bordered and valanced as if by newspaper cuttings. The stage backgrounds, five for the seven scenes into which the play is divided, are enlargements of sketches by Mr. McCutcheon, who thus invades the highbrow art of scene design.42

Although writer Collins seemingly felt the play precisely defined in its light burlesque treatment and adequate in its satisfactory chuckles, he obviously pondered the interpretation given by the Goodman players. He seemed perplexed as to the status of the Repertory group, whether they should be called "demi-amateurs or semi-professionals."43

The experiment of "An Heir At Large," however, was almost lost in the advance publicity given to the forthcoming January production of Georg Kaiser's "Gas." As early as November 18, 1925, press releases appeared foretelling a gigantic constructivist venture, "Gas," to be presented at the Goodman on January

42Ibid.
43Ibid.
14, 1926. It was announced that the endeavor was a cooperative arrangement between actors of New York and Chicago under the direction of Marion Gering late of the Meyerhold Theatre in Moscow but a recent Chicagoan by adoption.

Scheduled to open and play in Chicago at the Goodman for at least a month, "Gas" would be the first production attempted in America of the new constructivist art, popular on the continent. The Goodman Repertory supplied the actors while the other tasks of production were handled by a newly formed "ad hoc" Chicago Producing corporation. This corporation assured financial support to the endeavor, and a "group of guarantors . . . with Arthur Bissell as chairman . . ." would handle the financial demands through the organization.

The Goodman Repertory began rehearsal of the post-expressionist drama in mid-November. Hamilton Forrest, Chicago composer, was completing a full score of music for the play which required "an orchestra of ten pieces augmented by an organ, a steam boiler, a choir of clanking iron chains and a battery of boards and blocks." Another Chicagoan, Mitchell Anderson, was devising

\[\text{44 Constructivist Play in Bow Here,} \]\text{ Chicago Daily News, November 18, 1925.}

\[\text{45 Ibid.}\]
sculptural plastic masks; Samuel Russell of New York was designing costumes, and Louis Lozowick, another New Yorker, was doing the sets. 46

The set designs and scenery were to follow the constructivist settings utilized by European productions which had some vogue there, particularly as presented by Max Reinhardt. Constructivist art, as defined by one writer, was one of selective emphasis. If, for example, you wished to show a room, a row of beams was put up. If you wanted to show a windmill you used "sails over an elaborate sort of crating, nail a wheel at one side, and there you are." 47

Such an approach to theatrical settings was a new idea in America. Indeed, the entire project itself was an innovation as the promoters of the experimental production had defined other additional and, perhaps, novel aims. First, the sponsors insisted that the theatrical enterprise was an attempt "to work in theatrical harness with New York..." 48 Second, aware that as this time

46Ibid.

47Ibid.

48"Chicago's Latest Theatric Venture," Chicago Evening Post, November 19, 1925. As an earlier article in the Chicago Daily News stated: "While the Chicago players are doing 'Gas,' their New York colleagues will be rehearsing a constructivist version of Eugene O'Neill's, 'The Hairy Ape'. . . Later 'Gas' will go to New York and 'The Hairy Ape' will come west." "Constructivist Play Will Bow Here," Chicago Daily News, November 18, 1925.
the phrase "art theatre," the term that Stevens applied to the Goodman, carried a faint stigma because of its association with the little theatre in America which some lovers of the drama characterized as "an atmosphere of dilletante futility," the Chicago Producing corporation hoped the production of "Gas" by professionals would hopefully not be considered arty-art but "vital and interesting to view, for a cultured audience." Finally, as "Gas" was not aimed at box office success it could offer Chicagoans an opportunity to view the last word the theatre had uttered in constructivistic staging, in itself not a box office magnet. "Gas" then was to be an experiment perhaps to be fancied by some and to be called a failure by others but to be seen by those who desired to come.

There was both concern and support for the venture. From New York Stevens' friend Robert Hanna wrote that he had seen Kenneth MacGowan's commercial constructivist production of O'Neill's "The Great God Brown" and found it high in "literary flavor" but boring. Hanna reminded Stevens, however, that as Goodman was not a commercial theatre like MacGowan's, there was

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
"a reason for you to put on things that he might fail on . . . a
certain duty in giving Chicago a chance to see and judge a new . . .
play."52

Agreeing with the decision of the Chicago Producing corpora-
tion in arranging with the Goodman group to try "Gas," a writer for
the Chicago Evening Post felt the commitment to present the conti-
nental mode was not a hasty nor a premature undertaking for the
Goodman Repertory possessed ability and direction,53 direction
meaning Stevens' pledge to try the unknown with his professional
company. Writer Ashton Stevens, however, was more skeptical, not
that he frowned on experiments but that he could not understand di-
rector Gering's aims. In an interview with Stevens, Gering ex-
plained he was attempting to "discover the laws of Art to and for
us . . . ."54

Unable to comprehend the kind of art Gering was seeking
Stevens cited the constructivist director's own remarks. Beginning
with a quotation by Gordon Craig, Gering said:

'The Laws of art have not been described but must be
discovered.' We know from what point to begin work.

52Ibid.
53"They Will Do It With Gas," Chicago Evening Post, November 20, 1925.
54Ashton Stevens, "Drama Hard and Easy for Stevens," Chicago Herald and Examiner, December 6, 1925.
We have one thing to do—organize a laboratory of theatre arts; and this laboratory will disclose in what condition are the elements of the epoch, and find the way to unite the epoch with the laboratory . . . the Department of Psychology . . . the Department of Philosophy . . . the Department of Sociology, and . . . the Department of Esthetics. . . .

Then we are going to develop eight more departments showing the elements of the living theater: Theory and Technique of Acting, Acoustics [sic] Light and Color, Music, Dramatic Literature, Scenic Construction, Producing, Composing the Performance . . . . A new school of acting. We need perfect unity between actor, actors, everything that is seen or that happens on the stage. It can be developed if we will give to them one method of acting. I know which, but that isn't enough. My secrets are secrets for every one.

Seemingly writer Stevens was still in the dark as to what Gering's secret was, but the reviewer concluded that after all a definition of art was not really what mattered but the artist's art, and, he added, "Here's hoping that Mr. Gering gets [it] over . . . when they "Gas" us at the Goodman." Whether or not "Gas" would fulfill Gering's ideals of art or would live up to the Goodman reputation of doing "beautiful things . . . that fills [sic] an aesthetic emptiness . . ." or both, would be decided by what occurred on the Goodman stage and how that occurrence was viewed by the critics and the audiences.

55Ibid.
56Ibid.
57Chicago Daily News, January 5, 1926. No sub-title or author given.
Writer Fred Hollman wrote that the production of "Gas," a story of the issues and complexes supposed to exist between capital and labor, was a play where the emotional side should have been remembered by the author, but instead, emotion was barred, and in the theatre that is the "time to ring for the undertaker . . . [even though] Thomas Wood Stevens and his pupils do very fair acting in the piece."\(^58\) Evidently Gering's hopes to stir his audience to heightened consciousness through acting, color, light, music, and setting, "each a complement of the other\(^59\) and to create an atmosphere of emotion did not find a sympathetic viewer in Hollman.

The Chicago Daily News' Eugene Stinson found the "play, which leaves the audience holding the bag, . . . written in the ejaculatory manner of symbolic satire. The play written in shorthand . . . is acted in shorthand too.\(^60\)

Amy Leslie, also of the Chicago Daily News, was specific in her critique of the production. To her "Gas" was "not a drama in any sense of the distorted word . . . but it was a tremendously

\(^{58}\)Fred Hollman, "Gas," Newspaper untitled, January 15, 1926.

\(^{59}\)" 'Gas' at Goodman Theater, to Test New 'Ism'," Paper untitled, January, 1926.

thrilling symphony of disaster and fiercer emotional wars

. . . .61 She noted Thomas Wood Stevens did

wonders with splendid mob opportunities, and his individual actors do pretty well considering. Tableaux, sordidly beautiful chants and neophyte shadows of symbolism of the Maeterlinck and Galsworthy quality invade the sonorous glory of labor . . . It's all clear as mud.

Strange music and stranger caprices in various outlying scantlings and stairs, platforms and niches of oratory help make the odd, impressionistic puzzle of the scenic 'Gas' a complex of tryouts in architecture not very well expressed. But the robust oratory of the men and women rolled off to proclaim debates was really splendid.

Chiefly the whole amazing attempt, though admirable and magnificent in departure . . . left a grateful thought for the genuine pleasure of plain-spoken fun and play-acting. . . After all, the theater is primarily an artistic rest cure if properly demonstrated. Not a forum for first-page stuff and the world's dum-founding horrors in seething activities and accumulations.62

C. J. Bulliet thought "'Expressionism' in drama . . . will never become effective until he [Kaiser] squeezes dry the sponge of melodramatic emotionalism. 'Half-baked,' like Cubism of the period of 1909-10, is George Kaiser's expressionistic drama, 'Gas,' as presented at the Goodman theater."63


62Ibid.

A reviewer for the Chicago Tribune found the presentation of "Gas" a venture that was "interesting in its tribute to the resources of the Goodman Theater as a workshop of the stage. . . . As to the acting, it serves." But James Weber Linn in "Lights and Darks" noted:

As for the acting, it is superb. Thomas Wood Stevens as the Dreamer presents the complete and compelling illusion -- he is the only sane man in a world of lunatics. 'Gas' is worth your while. It may irritate you; it may confuse you; it may infuriate you -- but it will be long before it releases you. 65

The somewhat dubious critic Ashton Stevens headlined his two reviews of "Gas" as "Soon Wearies" and "Jeers, but Not Cheers for 'Gas'." In the first article Stevens termed the production "Too loud. We can't get the words for the music. Nothing, but the explosion of the gas plant can be audible over the double dose of disharmony." 67

A grateful silence sets in. Now words become words, despite still imperfect acoustics and a company of semi-pro players none too expert for such tricky work.

64 "Theater," Chicago Tribune, January 28, 1926.
67 Stevens, "Soon Wearies."
Not a deep play . . . in fact, a bit of a bore despite the high Russian fever that has gone into its post-expressionistic presentation. Trick scenery soon loses its thrill. I am at first pleasantly amused by the freak staging, the costuming, the rapid change of scene on an unchanged set by no other means than the spotlight, the stylized movement, the mechanical sing-song. But when these cease to be surprises and the play becomes a play to be considered only on its merits, I find the famous 'Gas' to be mostly wind.68

In his second article writer Stevens noted that 'Gas' at the Goodman . . . got a five-dollar audience and a rather scornful reception. Even the critics, who were provided with free seats, were more inclined to jeer than cheer. I heard a world-known professor of literature laughing at what he termed the crudeness and unsubtlety of the play. . . .”69

Whether one laughed, scorned, enjoyed, or questioned the production of "Gas", would-be buyers of seats for the play were turned away, nearly 500, as late as February 2, 1926.70 Perhaps the mixed receptions of the production were as much a drawing card as the play itself. It was the "first time such a thing had happened in the short history of the playhouse by the lake."71 And the

68Ibid.
69Stevens, "Jeers, But Not Cheers for 'Gas'."
70"'Gas' Turns Crowd Away," Chicago Evening Post, February 2, 1926.
71Ibid.
presence of Kenneth MacGowan of the Greenwich Village theater and
the Theater Arts Magazine at a performance of "Gas," which he
reviewed in a "three minute speech at the conclusion of the play . .
. ." 72 drew many theater buffs. 73

"Gas," the most controversial production offered during
Goodman's first season, was followed by the classic "Everyman."

Critics were quick to note:

72Ibid.

73In a letter to W. O. Goodman, MacGowan not only offered
his congratulations but criticisms of "Gas." The contents of the
MacGowan letter are second-hand in a letter from Goodman to
Stevens dated February 28, 1926. In general MacGowan praised the
theatre facilities.

The only available script of "Gas" in the Stevens Collection
was one used by Neal Caldwell when he directed the production of
"Gas" at the Little Theatre of St. Louis in the 1932-1933 season.
Stevens and Caldwell, after leaving the Goodman Theatre in 1930,
directed the Little Theatre of St. Louis for the seasons of 1931-1932
and 1932-1933.

Of particular interest in the script is a floor plan of the set
which included three risers and platforms and a center trap-door.
Handwritten notes and inserts place great emphasis on the changing
of lights at specific times, even to counting down to achieve precise
variations in exact time slots. Additional marginal notes determine
when the music is to be louder than the steam sounds, when the steam
becomes irregular, when there is more steam, when the lights turn
full red, etc.

Writer Ashton Stevens commented in his review of the Good-
man production of "Gas" that the changing of lights played a signifi-
cant role in the presentation. Probably Caldwell's script for "Gas"
was a similar working script of the Goodman effort.

The script for "Gas" is located in Volume 63, Stevens
Collection.
The teachers and pupils at the Goodman Memorial Theatre . . . [gave] a four times better performance of the ancient 'Everyman' than they have given of the four modern plays preceding it . . . I should be tempted to say that this backwards jump from Constructivist 'Gas' to an old morality play . . . looked like an immediate hit. To be sure, there were first-night slip-ups . . . but on the whole the performance had a certain professional poise hitherto lacking.

Another wrote:

For impressive dignity without melodramatic flourish . . . nothing has been seen on the stage of late more spiritually effective than the subtle 'fading in' of the stage setting after the rising of the curtain on a total blackness. The miraculous ease . . . of last night's lighting effects . . . its impressive staging, and with the crude but real drama of its construction . . . 'Everyman' held last night's audience mildly spellbound.

Later in March, 1926, the Goodman offered "The Tragedy of Nan" directed by Mrs. J. Elliot Jenkins. "After the first productions Mr. Stevens adopted the system of guest directors which the Neighborhood Playhouse had so successfully employed. It was required of these directors that they also teach in the studio."

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74 Ashton Stevens, "Actors Exhibit Greater Poise," Chicago Herald and Examiner, March 5, 1926.

75 C. J. Bulliet, "'Everyman' s Made Impressive as a Spectacle," Chicago Herald and Examiner, March 5, 1926.

76 Kane, p. 268.
One of the first guest actress-directors to fit the requirements, was Alexandra Carlisle, "programmed Mrs. J. Elliott Jenkins," who also played the title role in the production. A woman of talent and professional experience, Miss Carlisle's return to the stage followed a "hiatus which had endured since the time of her marriage." Miss Carlisle trained the Repertory Company for their roles in the production, and though she played her role knowingly and well, one writer commented, her "impersonation would . . . [have been] uncommonly effective if she were part of an ensemble whose other members provided something for her to act with, to, for, and against." The reporter stated:

It may be that something of feeling, passion, color, and a sense of character will come to the others of the cast with repetition. What they submitted last night was rather disordered and aimless . . . .

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80 Ibid.
The Repertory members were seemingly not infected by Miss Carlisle's gifts for understanding a character for, as another reported noted, they lacked "divine madness" and the performance lacked "unity and drive" and failed to "reveal the tragic fire." But though the company showed little to some critics to another the play itself was an "ostrich piece, not nearly as good as 'Everyman';" while a third added, "The play is staged with the usual unobtrusive effectiveness that Goodman theater's equipment makes possible."

The critics were impressed almost consistently by the technical facilities available for the Goodman productions, but they waxed hot and cold about the acting talent. Stevens kept the theatre's benefactor, W. O. Goodman – frequently out of Chicago – informed of the reviews and criticisms of the Goodman productions. Mr. Goodman, in his own way, evaluated the remarks and replied:

'It amuses us to see how Ashton S. [Stevens] has veered with the wind of public approval in what he has to say about us. Now Bullett sounds a good note in what he

81 Dale, "Speaking of Plays and Players."
82 Ibid.
83 Ashton Stevens, "And Rejoice When She Kills," Chicago Herald and Examiner, March 25, 1926.
has to say about Chicago's [sic] tardiness in finding out what we have to offer. I am sure the public will respond in time with appreciation and support. 85

Goodman's additional remark that the "box office receipts" would be the test of success indicated his thinking that the Goodman would make its own way eventually. 86 Although the Goodman was partially endowed and financial profit had been excluded as a major consideration when the Goodman was established, the budget was very limited. The actors, for example, were practically on a poverty wage. According to Whitford Kane:

The actors at Goodman were good actors . . . [and] not only were good actors difficult to obtain, but ones willing to work for twenty dollars a week were rarities. [This group] not only acted but they built and painted scenery and hurriedly sewed on their costumes. All night rehearsals were frequently necessary, and the Goodman Theatre, besides being the actors' place of employment, practically became their home. They ate backstage, and worked backstage, and at times exhaustedly fell asleep backstage. 87

Any expansion or increase in financial benefits would have to come from box office receipts. In this context, then, Mr. Goodman referred to success in terms of "box office" receipts.

85 Letter from William O. Goodman to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 9, 1926.

86 Ibid.

87 Kane, pp. 267-68.
After "The Tragedy of Nan" the Goodman presented "Juno and the Paycock", an additional show of the season. Playing March 30, 31, April 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 1926, "Juno and the Paycock" starred the second guest player-director, Whitford Kane, and drew expansive approval from the critics. Mathilde Len of the Chicago Evening Post praised Sean O'Casey's work as bearing "the touch of genius and remarkably powerful in lasting impressions," while the somewhat cryptic Ashton Stevens called it "the production that stands for the best the Goodman has yet done for modern playwrighting, acting and stage direction."

Apparently highly impressed by this offering of the Goodman, reviewer Stevens attended the presentation three times and found the play one of high honesty with its three principal characterizations showing "biting integrity." He commented:

As modern acting goes, here or in New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, I do not believe that you will find more authoritative and persuasive performances

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88 Mathilde Len, "Sean O'Casey Play is Seen at Goodman," Chicago Evening Post, March 31, 1926.

89 Ashton Stevens, "Points Real Paradise for Playgoers," Chicago Herald and Examiner, March 9, 1926.
Plaudits offered for the lagniappe production of "Juno and the Paycock" were also given to the seventh regularly scheduled production at the Goodman, a double bill of Molière's "Don Juan" or "The Stone Guest" and Shaw's "The Man of Destiny." "Don Juan," translated and staged by Thomas Wood Stevens, was termed a play with a "light-hearted glow" and a setting smartly done with a thrift and simplicity that gives a "sense of space and loneliness." Shaw's "The Man of Destiny" was felt to be "rich in whim and line" and "fleetly acted."

Both the Chicago Daily Journal and Variety highly praised the actors. Hubbard Kirkpatrick as Don Juan apparently displayed

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90Ibid. In this review Ashton Stevens mentioned the rich old tapestries and historical theatrical portraits hung on the walls of the corridors. Among the portraits were a "modern Russian idealization of a Gish sister" and "Shee's famous painting of John Philip Kemble." Possibly these were the paintings W. O. Goodman spoke of using for the dedication of the Goodman Theatre. Reports of the dedication ceremonies failed to mention famous paintings; instead blooming rose trees filled the corridors. Furthermore, Goodman referred to a Kendal portrait while the Stevens' column spoke of a Kemble portrait.


92Ibid.
constancy and versatility "like a dashing plume." Eula Guy, performing in both pieces, showed "astonishing breadth of appreciation of the exigencies of her parts." Special compliments went to William Franklin playing a servant, Whitford Kane portraying Dimanche, Neal Caldwell as the man of destiny, and Russell Spindler as the innkeeper in Shaw's work. Variety thought the Goodman theatre "did excellently as a whole with the production," and Dale commented:

The Goodman company has at length earned its right to serious consideration by presenting two graceful plays, each in a manner wholly suitable to it, and in the most urgent and vital performances seen . . . in this playhouse.

The final presentation of the 1925-1926 Goodman season was "A Midsummer Night's Dream" under the direction of Whitford Kane, who, also, played the role of Nick Bottom, the weaver. Of the production Kane noted that "the facilities of this experimental playhouse were ideal for such a production, as the theatre's great plaster

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 "Don Juan," Variety, April 1, 1926.
96 Virginia Dale, "Goodman Company Scores in Plays of Molière & Shaw."
cyclorama lent itself beautifully to the lighting of the fairy woodland scenes. "Reviewers Len, Dale and Stevens not only concurred with Kane's impression of the technical facilities but with each other as to the total effectiveness of the production. Each noted that the players "romped through the comedy . . . leaving, at the final curtain, a buoyant, wide-eyed crowd . . . " found " . . . the right rhyme to their endeavors . . . [of] gallop and fun . . . " and offered a "joyousness . . . which could not be denied. . . . their high spirits magnetically got over the stage and into the audience." Whitford Kane's directing talent was wished for by one writer who thought Kane should regulate high school commencements which frequently produced "The Dream" so badly. The reporter commented:

He paces the performance . . . and when, with the best intentions the eager Goodman children act as if

97Kane, p. 268.

98Mathilde Len, "Good Time is Had at the Goodman," Chicago Evening Post, May 21, 1926.


timetables and tide wait for no man, he lends his ease
and sureness to their haste, and rhythm is restored. 101

Writer Stevens liked the Greek costumes with their vivid colors, found
the dancing lovely, the music both ringing and pitiable, the delicate
wood scenes satisfying, some acting delightful, and the show an in-
stant success. He concluded:

At this rate the donor of the beautiful playhouse by
the lake will himself live to see his gift bear the fruit
of his dreams. 102

The first season of the Goodman closed on a seemingly en-
couraging note. The organization had shouldered unfavorable as well
as favorable comments. Among the several productions by the Re-
pertory Company critics had noted superior to poor plays, pro-
ductions, and acting. Press coverage had been wide for major
productions while the Studio's only production for children. "The
Golden Apple" by Lady Gregory, received only a small announcement
in a program note 103 and a brief description in the December Bulletin
of the Art Institute of Chicago. 104


The brief statement in the Bulletin noted that during the month of December the first of a series of performances of "The Golden Apple," under the direction of Muriel Brown and Stevens, would be given beginning December 12, 1925. As a part of Stevens' total scheme for Goodman to reach wide audiences he initiated theatre for children. He wrote:

Every effort will be made to popularize this field of work in the Goodman Theater, so that it will reach, not special groups of children, but all children. Generous cooperation is being given by the Chicago Public Library and its neighborhood branches, both public and private schools, and the juvenile departments of bookstores in spreading information of the approaching play to all children with whom they come in contact. 105

Goodman's first season exemplified its concepts: lesser known, classics, experimental plays, new works, children's performances, and non-commercial productions filled Goodman's stages; guest artist-directors offered their specialties to the school and the company; the latest technical advantages scored in effectiveness of stage settings; dedicated personnel formed the nucleus of the directive and acting staff; and, diversified audiences were encouraged.

The educational portion of the Goodman was not neglected, although records provide little information about the academic offerings. Classes were taught by company and staff members, and

105 Ibid.
Stevens maintained his ties with educational and institutional theatre. One such association was his address to the Conference on Drama in American Universities and Little Theaters at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 27-28, 1925.  

In his address "The Potentialities of a College Dramatic Department" Stevens assessed the mixed roles the university drama department plays. Noting that points of view toward college drama departments had shifted in the past eleven years, since he established the Department of Drama at Carnegie, Stevens outlined its present position of strength and influence. Stevens noted that at the inception of the Department of Drama at Carnegie "a certain body of information and a field of

106 Program of Conference on the Drama in American Universities and Little Theaters enclosed in a letter from President Thomas S. Baker to Thomas Wood Stevens, September 26, 1925. Also appearing on that program were Kenneth MacGowan, Director of the Provincetown Players, Frederick H. Koch, Director of the Carolina Players, and former Carnegie student Frederic McConnell, Director of the Play House, Cleveland. The aforementioned represented Little Theatres and Community Playhouses while representing Dramatic Training in Colleges and Universities were, in addition to Stevens, George P. Baker, Chairman of the Department of Drama, Yale University, B. Iden Payne, Head of the Department of Drama, Carnegie, and E. C. Mabie, Head of the Department of Speech, University of Iowa. Mabie would play an important inspirational and supportive role in Stevens' later career.
resources" had to be taught while simultaneously "holding to standards."107 Those same standards created a necessity for holding to standards, ", . . . a necessity of an intense effort to meet the very difficult question of the peculiar kind of technical leadership that will be of service."108 The service of which Stevens spoke was a service to the college at large and to the broad public.

No college theatre can create a theatre that will be wholly and literally popular. . . . But the theatre is a popular art and perhaps the most persuasive of the arts, and it does go out to the broad public and pick up accretions to the number of people who want to see good plays if the plays are offered.109

Above and beyond this general service, the college theatre offered, according to Stevens, other more specific contributions. First, to the community theatre and the little theatre movements the college theatre presented a nucleus of trained people who

107 Thomas Wood Stevens, "The Potentialities of a College Dramatic Department," Proceedings of the Conference on Drama, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 27-28, 1925, p. 78. Stevens noted in his address the title was given to him by B. Iden Payne. Stevens said: "I should never had dared to use such a large word as 'Potentialities.' It is Mr. Payne's word: I am very grateful to him. It leaves something in the way of an open opportunity. . . ." Ibid., p. 77.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.
carried "into that work . . . a large part of the standards that they picked up in the course of their college work." Second, the college theatre allowed a sort of "apprentice relation . . . [that] rests a great deal with the individual teacher . . . [not to] be solved by a curriculum." Learning, to Stevens, was in the doing:

The question of training comes down to whether you can put the young person into an atmosphere where his imagination will work, and whether you can create in him a sufficient interest in the subject to result in discipline, and industry, and sticking to it, and giving it the time that is necessary . . .

Evidently, if the thing can be learned, can to some extent be taught, it can be taught largely by doing it, and insofar as it is an art at all, almost entirely by doing it. Finally, there was the "potentiality" that a college dramatic department could develop a kind of repertory theatre in America.

Stevens noted that such an experiment in repertory theatre was in progress just then at the Goodman Theatre. Although some of the Chicago theatre goers had been a bit confused about the regular playing nights at the Goodman, the audiences were

\[110\] Ibid., p. 79.
\[111\] Ibid., p. 80.
\[112\] Ibid., p. 80.
beginning to get the idea of a non-changing bill. More importantly, a nucleus group of performers had been formed, and that same nucleus would probably move into community theatre, for not all young people from college theatre would be seeking Broadway. Where was the young person not interested in Broadway to go?

Stevens concluded:

They go into the community field, they go into some of those experiments that are beginning to branch between the school theatre and the commercial theatre. Our theatre at the Institute of Chicago is just between, and just now has one foot in each camp. It has a box office and presents regular performances; it has a paid company; it has alongside of that the school, the studio, and its objective is the modified repertory; that is, a theatre where plays that would not otherwise be given in Chicago will be given, as well as we can with the young company, for their own sake as plays and for the growth of that company and for the growth of the studio that works alongside of the company. 113

Stevens' views presented at the Conference, executed at the Goodman, and reported in the newspapers accounted for his being asked for assistance in organizing similar ventures in Pittsburgh and Kansas City, Missouri. As Stevens had frequently explained his idea of an American Art Theatre was unlike continental art theatres that thought nothing of "counting five or six months between dress rehearsals and performances." 114 Stevens' plan, as

113Ibid., p. 82.
114Ibid., p. 81.
outlined both in his conference address and numerous news releases, offered a more practical program.

Aware of his methods and his work in the field, persons from Pittsburgh who wanted to form a Pittsburgh Civic Theatre wrote Stevens they would like to imitate his repertory method of operation. 115 Also, a Mr. F.E. Bredouw of Kansas City, Missouri, wrote Stevens and detailed the facilities and talent available for a similar combined Art Museum and Theatre venture in that city, to operate in cooperation with the Kansas City Art Institute. Bredouw asked Stevens' assistance in outlining a practical procedure to get the venture off the ground. 116

By the close of the first Chicago season Stevens' endeavors at the Goodman had attracted the attention of many Chicagoans and theatre devotees in other parts of the country. St. Louis, Missouri was one area interested in the Goodman players in particular. The Garden Theatre of St. Louis extended the Goodman group an invitation to play repertory in its theatre for the summer of 1926.

115 Manuscript proposal for the Pittsburgh Civic Theatre, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.

116 Letter from F. E. Bredouw to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 13, 1926. Bredouw wrote that he had a newspaper clipping which described the Goodman program. Bredouw had used that clipping to gain the attention and minimal support of some Kansas City Art Institute patrons for a similar venture in Kansas City.
Stevens accepted the proposal without hesitation knowing it would provide "an excellent time in which to prepare new plays for the following [Goodman] season and furnish splendid training for his young actors." 117

GARDEN THEATRE, SUMMER, 1926

The offer to appear in St. Louis came from a Mr. Flint Garrison. Heading a movement to bring worthy theatre to the people of St. Louis, Garrison and two friends, Joseph Solari and Margaret Breen, had designed and built the Garden Theatre. An outdoor theatre located in University City, a suburb of St. Louis, the Garden had been built by these three people in an effort to provide a theatre "unexploited for profit" and laboratory in character where theories could be tested. 118

Able to maintain their livelihood in other businesses, the owners were not dependent on the theatre to supply their financial demands, and the theatre provided, then, a testing ground for Garrison's ideas of production, Solari's theories of lighting and background, and Breen's innovations in costuming.

117Kane, p. 269.

Designed by these innovative persons, the Garden Theatre offered players and audiences apparently many advantages. The structure was small enough in size and far enough removed from city traffic to "enable production without amplifiers" and yet maintain "the personality of the actor." The construction, designed and tested for acoustic properties at all points, was seemingly successful.

The stage itself was a bower among trees.

Two stately elms define its limits and interlacing boughs cover the stage with a roof of leaves... a three dimensional setting. In front of the stage and projecting into the audience is an apron which can be converted into a pool of water or covered with a platform, thus providing an intimacy between the players.

The amphitheatre was an artificial hill of concrete and steel shaped like a bowl cut in half.

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119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid. In passing, it is noteworthy to mention that when Stevens and Percy McKaye directed the Pageant of St. Louis, May 28-31, 1914, Stevens utilized the lagoons of water in the park area as natural amplifiers. He constructed his stages to project over the water and to surround it. As he noted in an interview, his engineering training came in handy when considering acoustic needs. The lagoons, he found, afforded a denser medium for carrying the voices of the actors to the 200,000 in attendance on each of the four nights of performance. Volumes 32 and 40, Stevens Collection.
Nearest the stage the curve of the bowl is 80 feet across and at the upper limits it is 240 feet. From the level of the stage, it rises 30 feet. A series of planes geometrically figured and measured, assure a clear view of the stage from every seat. The box seats -- two rows of them -- are situated halfway up and behind them is a wide aisle or promenade. 122

The lighting system provided easy access and immediate evaluation by the operator for

the lighting of the stage is controlled from a switch room under the auditorium where the operator has a full view of the stage. This placing of the lighting box under the auditorium is one of the advantages of the theater construction. . . . 123

This aptly named, Garden Theatre, was an area "transformed by trellis, vines, and awning into an inviting retreat or rest, or may be used as shelter for the entire audience in case of rain." 124 And as inviting as the Garden Theatre was in appearance it had also closed on its first successful season ---"successful financially in that it paid expenses, [and] successful artistically in that it reached new goals in local dramatic interpretation and stage-craft. . . ." 125. This was the theatre which had asked Stevens and his company to perform Shakespearean repertory during the summer of 1926.

122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
As early as April 17, 1925, Stevens forwarded publicity photographs and biographical sketches to Oscar Leonard, Publicity Director of the Garden Theatre. Whitford Kane was joining the group for the summer bill, and Garrison, not one to "stint on matters" agreed to augment the company with B. Iden Payne, and "some members of the Cleveland Playhouse." The salary for each member was a "hundred a week, with no allowance for rehearsal time . . . ." Apparently the St. Louis promoters were exuberant over the presence of Stevens and company performing in their city for many of them had not forgotten Stevens and his successful St. Louis pageant eleven years ago.

Although the original invitation to the Garden had requested a Shakespearean repertory, the plays for the summer included the Medieaval morality play "Everyman" and Molière's "Don Juan."

The Shakespearean productions included:

126Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Oscar Leonard, April 17, 1926.

127Kane, p. 269.

128Letter from Thomas Wood Stevens to Carl (last name not given,) May 2, 1926.

129Letter from Tom Smith to Thomas Wood Stevens, May 13, 1926.
"A Midsummer Night's Dream" June 14-19
Directors, Kane and Stevens

"Twelfth Night" June 21-26
Director, Stevens

"Taming of the Shrew" July 5-10
Director, Stevens

"Everyman" was presented June 20, as a Sunday night attraction, and every Sunday night for three weeks. As was "Everyman", "Don Juan" was under the direction of Stevens and ran from June 28-July 3.

The opener, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," was received as well in St. Louis as in Chicago. Headlines announced "Presentation Thought to Have Transcended Limits of Ordinary Stage Perfectly Executed," "Garden Theater Reopens with Glamorous Revival of Shakespearean Comedy," "Midsummer Night's Dream Is Most Pleasing Performance by Goodman Players," and "Direction's Artful Aid Renewed Play."

130 Programs for the Garden Theatre, Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.
132 Richard L. Stokes, St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 15, 1926.
133 Blanche Furth Ullman, St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 16, 1926.
134 Richard L. Stokes, St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 27, 1926.
One writer appreciated the sylvan wood setting, the "wonder-working stage investiture . . . [and] artificial light effect that rivaled the real article . . ., the distant reverberations of embowered instrumentalists. . . . the graduated color schemes, . . . and each word and gesture as delivered by as excellent a cast of skillful histrions as perhaps ever appeared here or elsewhere . . ."\(^{135}\)

In addition to the superior acting, one writer noted that the director's staging and touches of original business "compensated" for Shakespeare's paucity of stage directions and made the episodes of "the loves and deaths of Pyramus and Thisbe true tragical mirth."\(^{136}\) Even nature had cooperated for opening night with "spangled starlight, the new-bent silver bow of the moon . . . and fireflies to substitute for the glow-worms, . . . night tapers, . . . for Titania's shaggy lover."\(^{137}\) To a man, the opening night reviewers remarked that the timing between the lines and the 'real' moon was breathtaking.

\(^{135}\)Spamer, "Presentation Thought to Have Transcended Limits of Ordinary Stage."


\(^{137}\)Richard Stokes, "Garden Theater Reopens with Glamorous Revival of Shakespearean Comedy," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 27, 1926.
Hardly had Theseus told the future Duchess of Athens, 'Four days . . . and then the moon . . . shall behold the night of our solemnity' when the moon came from behind threatening clouds and watched the progress of the play throughout the night.  

The simplicity of the stage setting permitted the play to be given "without pause or change of setting. Thus the comedy emerged in its pristine form. . ." The cast of the Goodman Memorial Theatre was considered "too skillful to serve as a modern illustration for Shakespeare's satire on the amateur theater" with their diction "clear, far-carrying and eloquent." But the charming qualities of the production would have been of no value "if the players themselves did not fully meet the difficult requirements of this fantasy." So well performed was the production that

At the conclusion, when Robin Goodfellow asked the audience to 'give me your hands,' some 2500 pairs of palms volleyed joyous applause.

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138 "Shakespeare's Play Well Received at Garden Theater," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 16, 1926.

139 Stokes, "Garden Theater Reopens With Glamorous Revival of Shakespearean Comedy."

140 Ibid.


142 Stokes, "Garden Theater Reopens with Glamorous Revival of Shakespearean Comedy."
One enthusiastic viewer wrote a letter expressing his enjoyment of the production.

The enthusiasm of a first impression is not to be passed up. It's the only enthusiasm that counts. Your play last night has given me great pleasure. Your company of bland perfectionists have created that intimacy between themselves and their audience that is called sheer magic . . . since your very playing bars any such sinister notion to techniques. One leaves with the impression of having bitten off a great chunk of Shakespeare with all the juice still in him, and that state, on leaving a theatre, is so satisfactory that one doesn't give a hang for the recipe. 143

"Everyman," the second production and serious in character, allowed variety in the summer fare which the Goodman players handled artistically and which the audience applauded.

Called a solemn thing, the play required "art in high degree to insure its solemnity . . . [and it was] done reverently and intelligently." 144 The "art-associates" assembled at the Garden Theatre succeeded, in a courageous undertaking,

in holding a large audience in a mystic thrall . . . . There's satisfaction in knowing that such things can be done successfully at this time in St. Louis and the art-frame of this metropolis thereby enhanced . . . 145

143 Letter from Victor Proetz to Thomas Wood Stevens, June 20, 1926.


145 Ibid.
The Garden Theatre at 7200 Olive Street road mounted "Twelfth Night" as its third summer offering. Again the audiences were "bounteously satisfied by the artistry and skill of a company of players, whose intelligent mastery of the bard's lines . . . " and whose direction permitted "all of the actors to share the limelight. . . ."\textsuperscript{146} with an appreciative and receptive house. Described as "admirable fooling", the frolicking production had ample hilarity that "shook the sides of the production to the splitting point . . .\textsuperscript{147}" while retaining a high degree of artistry.

Under the "astute and waggish direction\textsuperscript{148}" of Thomas Wood Stevens, the presentation was faultless, "an engaging performance . . . [by] an acting body that lends itself to exacting roles with surprising aptitude.\textsuperscript{149}" For St. Louisians, Stevens and his Goodman art-theatre players were dispelling the "gloomy prophecies . . . that legitimate drama will have disappeared by

\textsuperscript{146}"Support Is Good at 'Twelfth Night' Garden Opening," \textit{St. Louis Times}, June 22, 1926.

\textsuperscript{147}"Admirable Fooling in 'Twelfth Night'," \textit{St. Louis Post Dispatch}, June 22, 1926.

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{149}"'Twelfth Night' Wins Much Praise," \textit{St. Louis Globe Democrat}, June 22, 1926.
the end of the generation. "150 According to one writer, those
foreboding "authoritative-prophets" had not studied the conditions
currently existing at the Garden Theatre where drama was vivid
and living and audiences were large and entranced. 151

The "Don Juan" production at the Garden Theatre was
Stevens' production and translation, " . . . the uncensored version,
. . . unobtainable [then] for reading purposes in English, [and]
first al fresco performance anywhere in the world."152 Stevens'
version which included the beggar scene, "lost for about 150
years . . .",153 because of suppression by the religious party in
France, and Stevens' English translation was "the only uncensored
translation in existence, . . . [and] a remarkably smooth and elo-
quent one, no less than resplendent and relished by the audience."154
Because of the stagecraft possible at the Garden Theatre, the entire

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150 "Support is Good at 'Twelfth Night' Garden Opening,"
St. Louis Times, June 22, 1926.

151 Ibid.

152 "Garden Players to Give First Out-Door Presentation
of 'Don Juan' Tomorrow Night," St. Louis Globe Democrat, June
27, 1926.

153 Richard L. Stokes, "'Don Juan' Is Landmark of
Liberty," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 27, 1926.

154 Richard L. Stokes, "Moliere's 'Don Juan' a Master-
piece," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 22, 1926.
work of five acts and thirty-five scenes was given without cuts, but the viewers, nevertheless, experienced "unquestioned enjoyment of one of the most brilliant satires . . . ," a dramatic event of prime moment."" Opening the fourth bill of the season on July 4, "The Taming of the Shrew" experienced little disturbance "despite the celebrating on all sides of the theater . . . " because of the "acoustical qualities of the bowl," the location of the theatre, and the masterful direction of Stevens of a professional cast. Considered "another triumph of the director and his brilliant company. . . 'The Taming of the Shrew' was a truly finished product." Presented with the introduction, the play was "effectively staged with simple scenery . . . several tuneful songs [by William Parsons, musical director, and] gallant robes."  

155 "Moliere and Caryll Are Drawn Upon For Outdoor Playhouses," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 27, 1926.  
156 "'Don Juan' Toned Down," St. Louis Star, June 22, 1926.  
157 Richard L. Stokes, "Moliere's 'Don Juan' a Masterpiece."  
158 "'Taming of Shrew' Big Success at Garden Theater," Untitled newspaper clipping, July 5, 1926.  
159 "'Taming of Shrew' Is a Triumph for Director Stevens," Untitled newspaper clipping, July 5, 1926.  
160 "'Taming of Shrew' Given At the Garden With New Charm," St. Louis Globe Democrat, July 6, 1926.
Throughout the summer at the Garden Theatre the refreshing approaches to Shakespeare, Molière, and "Everyman," the artistic professionalism, the high theatrical standards, and the totality of the Goodman company productions apparently prompted complimentary and enthusiastic remarks. According to Emily Grant Hutchings, an established art writer for the _St. Louis Post Dispatch_, the Goodman players as seen at the Garden Theatre in the summer of 1926 were a "fine company of players" who were unafraid to offer new interpretations that gave life to Shakespeare, "a Shakespeare who had all but died as material for the American and English stage because its tradition had become an impregnable wall to achievement."\(^{161}\)

Not confined to Shakespeare, the Goodman Repertory company in its offerings of Molière and "Everyman" had in each instance presented art in a succession of pictures keyed to color schemes, pitch of voices, and furnishings of the stage, presentations that were living examples of art in color, composition, atmosphere, unity, balance and perfect harmony. The freedom on the stage in the outdoor drama as developed in St. Louis, it was hoped

\(^{161}\)Emily Grant Hutchings, "Art and Artists," _St. Louis Post Dispatch_, June 22, 1926.
by one writer, would "be the means whereby our own pictorial art will reach its emancipation."\^162

Certainly playing on an open air stage with its natural pro-
scenium and long shallow pool, which separated the stage from the audience, inspired new bits of business.\^163

Dances . . . were especially effective and incorporated into nearly all the plays. In The Taming of the Shrew we had Sly, the tinker, stumble aimlessly into the pool in trying to rescue Katherine. A character was completely pushed into the water in Don Juan, while in Twelfth Night the lagoon served as a mirror for Viola. The frequency of the middle-western thunderstorm . . . was a common occurrence . . . and the skies pour forth torrents of rain while Titania prophetically murmured, 'The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye --.'\^164

The St. Louis season ended in August and was so successful, financially and artistically, that a "return engagement of the company was demanded for the following summer."\^165

KENNETH SAWYER GOODMAN MEMORIAL THEATRE, 1926-1927
SEASON

Again in Chicago for the 1926-1927 season of the Goodman Theatre, Stevens steadily increased his company and staff. In addition to the regulars of the previous season -- Howard Southgate,

\^162Ibid.
\^163Kane, p. 270.
\^164Ibid., p. 271.
\^165Ibid.
Muriel Brown, Mary Agnes Doyle, Helen Forrest, Russell Spindler, Arvid Crandall, Helen Gardner, and Leslie Marzolf of the faculty and Eula Guy, Ellen Lowe, Hubbard Kirkpatrick, Neal Caldwell, and Jack Daniels who rounded out the Repertory Company -- several new names were added. Whitford Kane and Mrs. J. Elliott Jenkins (Alexandra Carlisle), guest director-players of the 1925-1926 season, along with Davis Edwards, Nicholas Remisoff, and Redmond Flood joined the group. Missing for the first days of the 1926-1927 roster were Joesf Lazarovici and Roman Bohnen.

The academic work of the Drama Department of the Art Institute not only remained stable, but the curriculum increased by one course, a class in Costume Design. With the addition of different instructors and a new course in costuming, the faculty and their assignments were slightly revamped over the preceding year. The courses and instructors were:

**PERSONAL TECHNIC**

Mr. Stevens, Mr. Southgate, Miss Doyle, Miss Brown, Mr. Edwards [Mr. Edwards was not only a new face on the faculty but an additional instructor for the TECHNIC class.]

**DANCING**

[No instructor listed.]

**REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE**

Mr. Stevens, Mr. Southgate, Mrs. Jenkins (Alexandra Carlisle), [a new as well as additional instructor for the class.]
Productions by the Repertory Company for the second season remained at eight while the Studio group performances increased to six. "In response to demands for children's plays ... the studio [was to present] ... plays for children at regular Saturday afternoon matinees, which [would] give the students [in the Studio group] an opportunity to appear each week before an enthusiastic audience of young people."  

The increase of five productions by the Studio group seemed to indicate that at least the theatre "was beginning to attract a faithful audience [among the young in its] sure healthy growth."  

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167 Ibid. 
168 Kane, p. 271.
The Studio productions included:

"Miss Civilization," a one act play by Richard H. Davis,

"A Privy Council," a one act play by Major W. P. Drury and Richard Pryce,

"The Monkey's Paw", three scenes, by W. W. Jacobs, all offered during January, 1927,

"The Blue Bird" by Maurice Maeterlinck, a special Sunday matinee in March,

"Patty" by Muriel Brown, also in March, and

"Paola and Francesca" by Stephen Phillips, produced in the middle of May, 1927. 169

The eight Repertory performances for 1926-1927 included "Juno and the Paycock," an outstanding repeat of the previous year, and "Twelfth Night" which received enthusiastic acceptance at the Garden Theatre during the summer. The eight bills were:

"Why Not" by Jesse Lynch Williams, Opened October 13, 1926
   Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"The Game of Love and Death" by Romain Rolland,
   Opened November 10, 1926
   Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"Fashion, or Life in New York" by Anna Cora Mowatt,
   Opened December 8, 1926
   Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"Juno and the Paycock" by Sean O'Casey and "Double Shift", a one act by Dorothy Aldis, Opened December 29, 1926
Director, Whitford Kane

"Penelope" by Somerset Maugham, Opened February 9, 1927
Director, Mrs. J. Elliott Jenkins (Alexandra Carlisle)

"Twelfth Night" by William Shakespeare, Opened March 9, 1927
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"Mixed Doubles" by Louis E. Laflin, Jr., Opened May 2, 1927
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"As You Like It" by William Shakespeare, Opened May 21, 1927.170
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens.

Of the 1926-1927 season reviewers consistently seemed more inclined to favorable remarks about the Goodman Theatre productions. And the number of performances, per week, was expanded from three nights to four, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, with the usual Friday matinees.171 Generally speaking, the Goodman Theatre was making steady progress in its presentations of more and varied offerings, increasing the number of performance dates, and in reaching a wider audience. Outwardly,

170Ibid.
171"'Why Not' Opens Season at Goodman," Chicago Evening American, October 14, 1926.
the Goodman appeared the artistic venture Stevens had planned. Internally, however, there was some unrest among the players that plagued the entire season.

One disenchanted member was Whitford Kane who penned some of his complaints to Stevens in a personal note. His points of contention included his not being able to play every week as he had during his engagement at the Goodman the previous year. Also, he desired fare one way from New York, where he had played during his free time and for which he had been censured by the Art Theatre Committee. And finally, his not being able to work on other productions when that work did not interfere with the Goodman schedule found his working for less money than the previous year. 172

Kane’s dissatisfaction increased, and in January he wrote another note stating clearly his unhappiness.

I hate having to write this note for God knows it is no fault of yours. I feel conditions have changed so at the Goodman since last season and the Hubbard Kirkpatrick incident and the affection I held for him and the whole company has vanished into thin air, that my engagement means nothing more to me now than a matter of dollars and cents.

If the Art Institute is willing to pay me for my services in value of what I consider, I'll stay. If not, I am wasting

172 Personal note from Whitford Kane to Thomas Wood Stevens, undated, Vol. 23, Stevens Collection.
my time as love has departed. There must also be a condition worked out where I can work peaceably with my conscience. This is how I feel and it's better you know it. I would like to tell you even in this note of my deep affection for you personally.173

Apparently the other major upheaval in the Goodman company centered around some infractions by Hubbard Kirkpatrick and Jack Daniels. In March Whitford Kane was directing an additional show, John Galsworthy's "The Pigeon." Jack Daniels failed to attend a rehearsal, and Mr. Harshe and Mr. Goodman asked that Daniels be discharged immediately after the run of "Twelfth Night." In a letter to Mr. Harshe, Stevens explained that he recognized disciplinary measures were to be enforced for the breaking of rules. However, Stevens continued:

I find difficulty in discharging Daniels for failing to come to the Pigeon rehearsal in view of the fact that Mr. Kane did not post the call until an hour after Daniels had left the theatre, and no phone call was made. And finally, the most important factor is that in making this change at this time, I should be imposing a heavy burden of extra rehearsal on Mr. Kane, and his illness and exhaustion is already a matter of extreme concern with us.174

173Note from Whitford Kane to Thomas Wood Stevens, January 11, 1927. The solution to Kane's dissatisfaction was not uncovered in the Stevens Collection. A note of inquiry regarding the matter went unanswered by the Art Institute.

Hubbard Kirkpatrick's improper actions were undefined; however, both Daniels and Kirkpatrick were retained in the Repertory Company through the season, but they were not reengaged thereafter.\textsuperscript{175}

Notwithstanding these problems, the Goodman Theatre showed an overall financial growth at the box office and in the number of those who attended the Goodman productions,\textsuperscript{176} and director Stevens continued his program of artistic productions.

According to available records one production for the 1927-1928 season gained wider coverage or acceptance than any other. The opening show, "Why Not," by Jesse Lynch Williams, provided "an opportunity to put over a new play with spirit, dash, and a sense of assurance . . . in a stagewise presence that excels anything seen in the Goodman theater last season."\textsuperscript{177} The players, still not up to the artistic theatrical standards of one Chicago critic, showed "some sense of ensemble, although the general effect of the

\textsuperscript{175} Note from Robert Harshe to Thomas Wood Stevens, March 24, 1927.

\textsuperscript{176} In January, 1931, Stevens wrote an article, "What the Audience Wants," for Theatre Arts Monthly. The article refuted the argument of the Art Institute that the Goodman was showing no financial gain. Stevens listed the shows and the average index figures and ratings for all his seasons at Goodman. 1925-1926 showed an average rating for the season as .395, while the 1926-1927 average for the season was .481. Thomas Wood Stevens, "What the Audience Wants," Theatre Arts Monthly, XV (January, 1931), 63.

\textsuperscript{177} Loren Carroll, "Players Show Skill," Chicago Evening Post, October 14, 1926.
acting remains far-away and disinterested." But to another, "the excellent cast . . . under the personal direction of Thomas Wood Stevens gave considerable eclat . . . to the opening of the Goodman Theater's second season."  

The eclat referred to was more meaningful when discussed by yet another writer who saw the Goodman productions as performances worthy of an art theatre dedicated to particular provinces rather than the mountings of commercial theatrical endeavors.

A repertoire company in so considerable a huddle of humanity as Chicago serves a purpose the value of which is not in peril of overestimation. It is not required to affect the insolent splendor of the commercial theatre, it need not regard the popular appeal of a play as its chief recommendation, it may set its aim above mere amusement, and it need not specialize in virtuoso acting.

It has, however, various obligations. It should pioneer and experiment; it should exhibit catholicity of taste; it should make the drama of the world its field. It should strive to develop players, to mold them into a rounded organization and to secure through them fluent, graceful, illusory performances.

And its object in doing these things is to refine the taste of the public and to gratify the interest of the minority which already has an acquaintance with dramatic literature.

178: "Theater," Chicago Evening American, October 14, 1926.

The company of the Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theater would appear rightly to sense its obligations and appreciate its opportunity. 180

Accepting its obligations, the Goodman players took the opportunity of presenting, for the first time on an American stage, Romain Rolland's "The Game of Love and Death." Using Eleanor Stimson Brooks' translation of the French play the Repertory company sought "to pitch their talents to a peak many an experienced actor might call beyond him . . . Whether the things these players aspire to do is captured by them or not, their aspirations are responsible for several productions that would go otherwise unheard into this hinterland." 181

In attempting to do catholic drama, the players were not always to blame for seemingly uninspired performances. The form of "The Game of Love and Death" was deliberately cast "in an antiquated mold . . . severely classic, conforming to the rules of Greek tragedy . . .," and it was not wholly the fault of the repertory company of the Goodman "that the drama drags along heavily for two acts, attaining to something we recognize . . . as 'dramatic' only


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in the final episode." The play offered, nevertheless, "an opportunity for those who have been decrying the commercial stage to rally to support worthwhile drama. . . By all means go to the Goodman." A sharp contrast to Rolland's heavy work was Goodman's third production, "Fashion," . . . the funniest show in town." The great mirth evoked by the performance was probably unintentional.

The Goodman players struggled manfully -- and womanfully -- to put the ring of sincerity in the homilies . . . [and though] the players conducted themselves like veterans thru the trying ordeal . . . toward the finish, the entire audience threw aside the etiquette it had learned at mother's knee, and fairly rocked with delight.

The revival production of this 1845 American play, wrote one critic, saw some "rough spots . . . become high spots to be set down as conscious gestures, and the players manage a mood of satire with an utmost seriousness." However, the "conscious gestures" and

182 C. J. Bulliet, "Rolland's Play a Tragedy of Epic Grandeur," Chicago Evening Post, November 11, 1926.


185 Ibid.

utmost "seriousness" tainted the performance for another reviewer:

The actors do not let the play take care of itself... Instead they play it in a spirit of travesty... of the manner in which they surmise or have been told that players of eighty years ago acted it. [But] the line between acting bunk drama earnestly and acting it as palpable bombast is too fine to be discernible by more than one in every ninety-nine practitioners of acting. 187

With all of its faults, "Fashion" was termed the best yet at Goodman for Stevens finally turned on the footlights and permitted the audience to have a look at the faces of the cast. 188 One appreciative viewer wrote, "Go and see it by all means. It will give you a delightfully superior feeling." 189

A repeat performance of the successful 1925-1926 production of "Juno and the Paycock" received rave notices that echoed the approval of the previous season. Featuring the same actors, Kane, Smith, and Doyle, "The Paycock" displayed beauty and literature, "impossible for commercial stages." 190 Perhaps the outstanding success of the play was responsible for a series of interviews with

187 "Theater," Chicago Evening American, December 9, 1926.

188 Ibid.


190 Virginia Dale, "Kane and Best Goodman Cast Act 'Juno and the Paycock'," Chicago Daily Journal, December 30, 1926.
theatrical personnages. At any rate, immediately after the pro-
duction of "The Paycock" one columnist interviewed Whitford Kane
and Stevens.

In his interview Kane spoke of modern stage problems:

Two things are responsible for the sterility of the
modern stage. The theater in the first place is not
just for emotion or to project ideas solely for the
sake of intellectual content. And, in the second
place, the tradition of great acting is in abeyance. 191

Kane wanted compatibility of great emotion that resides in
a great idea fused by the "Saving flux of human feeling." He
continued:

The stage belongs by divine right to a wholly different
type of person. It is the divinely appointed province
of the artist - the schooled and disciplined man of
genius with a deep and reverend sense of vocation. 192

In a similar vein Stevens remarked that only a subsidized
theatre with professional artists would be the boon that would assure
artistic drama in Chicago. He noted the need to decentralize the
theatre, as a national institution, from New York, to which transients
of commercial theatre were drawn, to other metropolitan areas
which could support such a subsidized theatre. Stevens asked:

191 Frances Farmer, "Kane Talks of Modern Stage,"
Chicago Daily American, December 29, 1926.
192 Ibid.
Whose job is it in Chicago to push the fight? It is partly the job of those of us who are engaged in dramatic work. It is partly the task of the friends of the serious theater. The press, too, has its responsibilities. And certainly Chicago's business interests could help with the pressure.¹⁹³

In his interview Stevens saw the apparent need for help from diversified factions, and in his address at the Drama Conference at Yale in February, 1927, he outlined, furthermore, the expanded responsibility of the art theatre to broaden that same audience mind to a higher level while simultaneously developing artists. One method, Stevens cited, was to consider not just the opportunities of the theatre but to recognize and accept the obligations of the theatre. The theatre should, he said,

Shift the emphasis from tricks of production and inexperienced acting to the real business of every theater, - the play. Choose the plays with one eye to the more exacting elements in our audience. But we must choose a play by as stiff a standard as we dare.¹⁹⁴

The high standards for play selection and performance seemed to be exemplified with Goodman's production of "Juno and the Paycock," and one critic bemoaned its being taken off for "there

was a play, and there was a performance."  

"Penelope," a Somerset Maugham revival, followed "The Paycock" on the Goodman stage. Guest director-player, Mrs. J. Elliott Jenkins (Alexandra Carlisle), revealed proficiency in both of her tasks. According to one reporter she was capable of "providing a well-knit and graceful restoration of the play . . . and adorning it with an appealing and credible personation."  

"Twelfth Night," next at the Goodman, was described as "up to par and frequently better, . . . puts Shakespeare back in the best seller class . . .," costumed in Shakespearean tradition in subdued tones, farthingales, and in the colors of black, white, and purple, only, played "in one key and in a single tone. . . ." "not bad and not particularly good."

195Ashton Stevens, "Other Plays," Chicago Herald and Examiner, February 11, 1927. Although Dorothy Aldis' "Double Shift," a one act, preceded "The Paycock," there was no record of its being reviewed.


Following "Twelfth Night," "As You Like It" received more enthusiastic reviews.

What a good time they seem to have with 'As You Like It' at the Goodman! I mean the players, of course, but I do not mean the players exclusively. I had a good time. They seemed to be so little preoccupied with the tricks of the Shakespearean tradition, caring not a tinker's in precation [sic.]

I felt that even the least skillful student in the long cast at least knew what he was playing, what the comedy was about and what his part meant to him. I found myself not only living through but positively enjoying the seven ages of man.  

"Mixed Doubles," the final offering of the Goodman Theatre's 1926-1927 season received "mixed" receptions. Critic Bulliet of the Chicago Evening Post felt that it was one of those things that "may be worth trying out for a week, on condition that when the week is up the manuscript will be shelved in the archives and forgotten." Mathilde Len of the Chicago Daily News, however, found an evening of "Mixed Doubles" an evening "of good plotting, good playwriting and good acting." She concluded that "the repertory has been hitting a fine stride this season. They have caught on."
During its second season the Goodman Theatre had received warmer reviews and greater support. In spite of some internal problems --not to mention an external reprimand from the Fire Department of the City of Chicago for Goodman's lack of an adequate sprinkler system, fireproof shops and scenery, free exit passage, and sharply displayed exit signs which had to be corrected or the theatre would be closed\(^{204}\) and an anonymous letter from an interested theatre buff who had decided that the reason the small number of persons came to the Goodman productions was because of the extremely high priced seats, $1.50, which should be lowered to 75\(^c\)--\(^{205}\) the Goodman Repertory offered three American plays --one new three act, one new one act, and one revival, two Shakespearean plays, an Irish play, and the American premiere of a French drama. The Studio productions had increased from one during the 1925-1926 season to six during the 1926-1927 season.

That same season Stevens had his views of an American art theatre published in an interview and an address given at the Drama

\(^{204}\) Notice 16343 from the Fire Department of the City of Chicago to the Art Institute of Chicago, RE: Goodman Theatre, March 2, 1927.

\(^{205}\) Letter from anonymous writer to Thomas Wood Stevens, December 3, 1926.
Conference at Yale, answered requests for his translation of "Don Juan," offered recommendations for the position of Director of the Columbia, South Carolina, Stage Society, and investigated inquiries about possible openings on the Goodman staff. A scheduled production of John Galsworthy's "The Pigeon", directed by Whitford Kane, was not presented probably because of Kane's exhaustion, noted in the note to Robert Harshe, March 22, 1927. But the problems were surmounted, Roman Bohnen returned to the Repertory Group for the season, and the Goodman Theatre showed a slight financial growth while maintaining its artistic standards.

ST. LOUIS GARDEN THEATRE, SUMMER 1927

The Goodman Repertory returned to the St. Louis Garden Theatre for the summer of 1927 and presented eight productions as compared to five the previous year. The summer bill included:

"As You Like It," Shakespeare, Opened June 7, 1927,

"The Taming of the Shrew," Shakespeare, Opened June 14, 1927.

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206 Letter from Irving Pichel to Thomas Wood Stevens, October 27, 1926.

207 Letter from W. Bedford Moore to Thomas Wood Stevens, April 18, 1927.

208 Letter from Hugh Osborne to Thomas Wood Stevens, February 17, 1927.
"She Stoops to Conquer," Goldsmith. Opened, June 21, 1927,

"A Midsummer Night's Dream," Shakespeare. Opened, June 28, 1927,

"Much Ado About Nothing," Shakespeare. Opened, July 5, 1927,

"Fashion," Mowatt. Opened, July 12, 1927,

"Romeo and Juliet," Shakespeare. Opened, July 19, 1927,


The company was composed of Whitford Kane, B. Iden Payne, Thomas Wood Stevens, Hubbard Kirkpatrick (even though he had been released from the Goodman Theatre,) Jack Daniels (also relieved of his association with the Goodman,) Neal Caldwell, Arvid Crandall, Russell Spindler, Will Greer, Eula Guy, Ellen Lowe, Helen Forrest, Lucille Colbert, James Todd, Alma Randall, Ross Matthews, Art Smith, Roman Bohnen, and Thomas Ireland. Also included were Bernard Ostertag, Gordon Ray, Richard Steele, John M. Griggs, Charles Dillon (who was later to marry Stevens' daughter, Phoebe,) Ellen Root, Hilda Ouse, D. Cavanne, Ted Steinbrugge, Carol Crowe,


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Lambert Kaiman, Ralph Schneider, Regina Drossness, Sarah Selby, Virginia Selby, and Henrietta Newman. 211

As Stevens had seen the Garden Theatre in 1926 as a preparation period for Goodman productions, so the Goodman had prepared the company to present productions at the Garden Theatre in the summer of 1927. "As You Like It," which closed the Goodman season, opened the Garden Theatre summer bill. The play was received as a "smooth and finished" product except "when the shirt-sleeved stage hands wandered about setting the stage in full view of the audience." 212

Similarly, "The Taming of the Shrew" was called a fine comedy which should be a "revelation to those who have seen it in only those adaptations pruned and trimmed to feed the vanity of stars."213 The Goldsmith comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," a new addition to the fare, however, received less than glowing comments.

The presentation was creditable and interesting but in the main was lacking in the sureness of attack and balance which has distinguished previous performances

211 Ibid.

212 "Capable Cast in 'As You Like It' at Garden Theater," untitled newspaper clipping, June 8, 1927.

of this group. Last night there was a faintly observable lack of ease and the players occasionally had to grope for their lines.\textsuperscript{214}

If the company did not rise high enough to glorify the play, at least the program itself was noteworthy.

As for the program, it strikes a new note of quaint humor, quite apart from and above the peurile jests that usually fill the space in theater programs. . . It is illustrated with two wood cuts and states, in part, 'By the company of players from the Goodman Theater in Chicago, augmented by notable artists from London, Dublin, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Webster Groves and other cities.'\textsuperscript{215}

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" gained only passing comment that it was a production worthy of sustained praise. "Much Ado" was seen as so preposterous in its motivation that it was sometimes disconcerting. But

the skill with which Mr. Thomas Wood Stevens and associates at the Garden Theater last night made a whole garment out of the Elizabethan rag-bag . . . required considerable redistribution of emphasis . . . \textsuperscript{216}

"Fashion," done previously at the Goodman Theatre in the preceding season, ran smoothly and fulfilled the wishes of the subscribers.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[214]Thomas B. Sherman, "Goldsmith's Comedy at Garden Theater," untitled newspaper clipping, June 22, 1927.
\item[215]"Goldsmith Play Begins at Garden Theater," \textit{St. Louis Star}, June 22, 1927.
\item[216]Thomas B. Sherman, "'Much Ado' Given at Garden Theater," \textit{St. Louis Post Dispatch}, July 6, 1927.
\end{footnotes}
"Romeo and Juliet" and "The Rivals" rounded out the summer offering. Of "The Rivals" critic Sherman noted:

Though not a great play it has had great performances and it is regrettable that last night's performance can not be listed as one of those. Several of the players had parts which didn't fit them and several of those who were not misplaced were evidently suffering from a lack of familiarity with the text and spirit of their roles. As a result the movement of the play was always a little off the rhythm.\(^{217}\)

Although there were some less than enthusiastic comments about the Goodman Repertory's productions at the Garden Theatre, there was also gratitude for their attempts.

It were a pity should the closing of this season's Garden Theater productions, so artistically presented and performed by the Goodman Players of Chicago, pass without a few words of gratitude from the discriminating public.

The Garden Theater ranks with the Stadium of New York and Ravinia Park of Chicago in presenting to the public the finest of really worth-while things. The well selected comedies of old masters, so excellently given by the really consummate artists of the Goodman Theater Company... have offered artistic and aesthetic [sic] bright spots in an otherwise dull and unproductive summer.\(^{218}\)


GOODMAN THEATRE, 1927-1928 SEASON

Notable productions by the Goodman Theatre during the 1927-1928 season offered outstanding innovations and earned continued impressive comments. During this season Stevens followed a plan of having the "direction of plays not confined to any single person, but to the one considered most sympathetic to the play."219 The wild acclaim for Kane's "The Wild Duck," Cloyd Head's, an addition to the staff, "The Little Clay Cart," and Stevens' "Camille in Roaring Camp," his own work, and "The Vikings in Helgeland" exemplified the success of his "sympathetic" director policy.

These four plays were preceded by four others to comprise the 1927-1928 Repertory Company bill:

"Tower of Nesle," Dumas. Opened October 17, 1927
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"Outbreak," L. W. Vedrenne. Opened November 22, 1927
Director, Whitford Kane

"She Stoops to Conquer," Goldsmith. Opened December 12, 1927
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"The Mask and the Face," Luigi Chiarelli. Opened January 2, 1928
Translator, C. B. Fernald

219 Kane, p. 272.
"The Wild Duck" Ibsen. Opened February 12, 1928
Director, Whitford Kane

"Camille in Roaring Camp," Stevens. Opened March 8, 1928
Director, Whitford Kane

"The Vikings in Helgeland," Ibsen. Opened March 20, 1928
Director, Thomas Wood Stevens

"The Little Clay Cart," a Hindu drama. Opened May 29, 1928
Director, Cloyd Head

The Studio wing with its children's theatre productions gained increased attention, not only by the numbers of Chicagoans who attended and supported the performances but in the theatre publication, Drama, read by countless others in the theatre world. The article stated that Miss Muriel Brown, an experimenter and innovator of children's theatre in her native Indiana and a protégé of Stevens at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, "was given a wholly unexpected opportunity to try her ideas" of plays for children, when Stevens was put in charge of the Goodman and invited her to join his staff.

220 Newspaper clippings, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.

Since its inception, three years ago, the Studio wing had produced ten plays for the children's theatre. The first year's productions were limited to Lady Gregory's "The Golden Apple," Goodman students' "The Captive Princess," and Charles S. Brook's "Wappin' Wharf." The large response to the productions, the attempt to establish children's theatre as a permanent institution, and the opportunity to expand the training of students in designing and executing sets, costumes, lighting, stage managing, acting and writing prompted the Institute, under Miss Brown's recommendations, to expand the second season of the children's theatre.


The third season offered Mary Austin's literary folklore play "Shining Island," Brown's "The Teller of Tales," an Arabian

[^222]: Ibid., 13. Programs, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection, corroborate Laflin's statements.

Future plans for the studio wing were to include "dramatization of some of the popular characters and situations of A. A. Milne and poems set to music, for "child audiences are more critical than adult audiences, and children will not be bored in silence and sugar-coated sentimentality." The growth and apparent success of the Goodman's children's theatre program seemed to provide tangible support of Stevens' idea that art theatre could be appreciated by audiences provided the drama was worthwhile.

The Goodman Repertory opened its season of catholic drama with Dumas' "The Tower of Nesle." Writer Dale praised the choice of the Dumas play by the Goodman because such a work was not available on the commercial stage and because of Goodman's "intrinsic necessity of producing such plays . . . [even though] the players were put under a handicap of fierce dramatic mood and stilted dialogue unfamiliar to American audiences;" but, she noted, the Goodman players do fine jobs and reviewers are getting more

223 Ibid.

224 Ibid., 12.
than a little proud of the achievements of "their" Goodman in Chicago.225 One critic called the Goodman her prize, while another called the Goodman's "Tower of Nesle" a bright spot of the Chicago stage, a good cast and an excellent play.226

"Outbreak," the second production, "broke out . . . in its world premiere and like some modern literature left its audience quite absolutely in the dark at the finale. We were told, [wrote one reviewer,] the repertory company was on the lookout for something startling and we were duly startled."227 Though the play was a surprise for one writer, another felt the Goodman did it well enough to call it an exceptionally effective device that held the audience tense while simultaneously proving the strength of the play as stage material,228 the latter an aim of the Goodman theatre. And, Ashton Stevens, the critic usually stingy with his compliments, noted that


"for an art theatre 'Outbreak' is what the mart theatre calls a 'wow'!"229

While "She Stoops to Conquer," the third production, appeared "messy and spread all over the stage (even with all the room on the Goodman stage) . . . [it was] a play which demonstrated the company's growing skill."230 And the following mounting, an Italian comedy, "The Mask and the Face" by Luigi Chiarelli based on Synge's "Playboy of the Western World," made even the idea of going to a funeral excruciatingly funny. Not shying from comedy but finding comedy more difficult to do with intense young people,231 Stevens may have noted with interest Ashton Stevens' evaluation of the Goodman's ability to play the comedy, "The Mask and the Face:"

If the Goodman players paced and timed every laughable line, the play wouldn't be over till midnight. It is both their fortune and misfortune not to make too much of the verbal brilliancy.232

229Ashton Stevens, "We're Not So Bad As It Paints," Chicago Herald and Examiner, November 27, 1927.


After presenting four plays called both good and "stilted, startling, messy, and excruciatingly funny," the Goodman produced four consecutive shows that brought raves from the viewers. The first was "The Wild Duck" which displayed superior directing and acting. Kane's direction was called masterful, thrilling, humorous, and human. And while the staging was accomplished with "... a clear eye without fake drabness... with golden shafts of humor," actress Dorothy Raymond was powerful as Gina, "calm as an emerald [with] a flat even power emanating from her," and Katherine Krug's portrayal of Hedwig was "a felt realization of her innocency," delicate, sincere, graceful, and controlled.

The acting of the Goodman members had often been found less than professional while the directing had generally been received favorably. But in "The Wild Duck" both the acting and directing earned favorable reviews and enthusiastic plaudits.

233 Ashton Stevens, "As Good As, If not Better Than, 'Juno',' Chicago Herald and Examiner, February 12, 1928, circa.
234 Ibid.
235 Ibid. Stevens' critique of Miss Krug bears a possible personal touch at this point. In July, 1928, Ashton Stevens and Katherine Krug were married.
The following production, directed by Kane, was Stevens' own "Camille in Roaring Camp," a superb new play "in a brand new mood done in a funny old way out of funnier old material."\(^{237}\) The play was Stevens' capital idea of "hitching up Dumas fils [his "La Dame Aux Camelias"] and Bret Harte [and his western folks.]\(^{238}\) The play was "a doughty old tragedy of fond and affected love . . . shown as it reacted on the he-man in the open spaces when thar was gold in them thar hills."\(^{239}\) The uncurtained stage, set up like a dance hall, was a theatre within a theatre for a play within a play. A travelling troupe of actors gave "Camille" in a mining camp. Kane remembered one delightful dilemma of the hero, Armand:

An especially funny scene occurs at the end of the second act when the theatrical troupe, peering out through the curtain, discover that the audience has disappeared. They learn from a dance hall girl that the miners have gone out to hang a sluice robber but will be coming back soon.

Armand: Now look here, all of you. They've gone out to hang a man. What for? Just for lifting dust from other people's sluices --whatever sluices are. If they hang a man


\(^{238}\)Ibid.

for that what'll they do to me when they see our fourth act?

Props: That's right. They're talking already about what they'll do if Camille ain't treated right. We ought to have played *Hamlet*.

Papa Duval: I'm afraid it's too late to change now.

Armand: Well, we've got to change something. If we go on with this -- (Sound of shots outside) Angels and ministers of grace -- Look here. Couldn't we change the last act? Couldn't you come on as a minister and marry me to Camille?

Papa Duval: And ruin the tragedy? Certainly not. It would destroy the entire effect of my scene.

Armand: Well, if you don't they'll destroy me, your leading juvenile.

The final act was revised while the miners fingered their shooting irons to be sure that everything was done right by their heroine Camille.240

There was only one intermission in the production of "Camille in Roaring Camp," but entr'actes, filled with renditions of special songs and dances by the company members, heightened the production's atmosphere of good times. The controlled abandon of presentation and an ingenious bit of writing, a worthy play, gave "breadth of its Goodman enterprises," said one reviewer. "It is to

240 Kane, pp. 274-75.
such companies as the Goodman one must look for the variety of things impossible to other theatres."241

Whereas "The Wild Duck" received compliments for its directing and acting and "Camille in Roaring Camp" earned acclaim as a worthy new dramatic vehicle, the technical innovations for achieving lighting effects in the next production, "The Vikings of Helgeland," drew national attention. England's Thomas Wilfred had invented a color-organ called the Clivilux which could project color on the stage -- in a fireplace, over a mantle-- by playing certain keys on the instrument. For fifteen years Wilfred had begged managers to let him display his Clivilux, but to no avail.

For the "first American professional performance of 'The Vikings' in English"242 Stevens gave Wilfred and his Clivilux an opportunity to perform. Instead of orchestral embellishments, "Wilfred sat in the orchestra pit alone and painted the moods and tempo of the play [in color] on a background of sky and sea... a highly effective moving panorama of color which changed in hue and intensity according as the passions of the characters rose and fell."243


Stevens' decision to display the Clavilux was based on Goodman's policy to experiment with new theatrical offerings, whatever they were, even if they failed. His daring was even more apparent in the face of a large financial deficit at the Goodman. But Stevens had affirmed in an earlier press release that although the total annual deficit for the past year was $10,000 -- as compared to another Chicago art theatre's $10,000 monthly deficit-- the mere $5,000 annual endowment for the Goodman whose operating expenses were $90,000 was offset by box-office receipts. Therefore, he was going to find the necessary money to enable Wilfred to display the Clavilux.244

Although one critic was disturbed by the heavily twilit scenes and disconcerted by the ever increasing and decreasing light on speeches of varying intensity, she noted that such an experiment in "lighting effects would not be dared in commercial theaters . . . and it is most interesting."245 "The Vikings," presented on a bare stage lighted only by "Mr. Wilfred and his Color Organ, made more than a little history at the Goodman."246


246Ashton Stevens, "Ibsen History Is Made At the Goodman."
The final production of Goodman's 1927-1928 season was a Hindu drama, "The Little Clay Cart." Directed by newcomer Cloyd Head, recently returned from the Far East and Africa, the Sanskrit drama, the only extant play of India's King Shudraka, "whoever he may have been,"247 was a drama of invention. Shudraka's drama of invention was unhampered by the rules of time or space, but his skill transformed it into

a vivid dramatic form with a galaxy of characters so universal in their appeal that our own time can still see in them the prototypes of people today.248

Such familiar characters as a merchant, maid-servant, man-servant, courtesan, villainish brother-in-law, mother, monk, shampooer, gambler, burglar, judge, clerk, herdsman, and a king peopled the script. And the ancient story of "the love of a sweet-souled courtesan for the broken merchant was told with sparkle and spoof. Cross-purpose, the double cross, and for all I know the cross-word puzzle are involved in this seemingly modern, albeit fantastical, old play."249


248 Ibid.

Thought to be written about the fifth century A.D., the play called for vivid imagination on the part of the viewers:

Houses which are supposed to reached by circuitous city streets are placed on either side of the stage; imaginary doors are opened; imaginary passersby addressed and a bench under a spreading painted canvas tree is called an orchard.250

Even by modern standards the ancient "The Little Clay Cart," which called for active imagination and sensitive participation from the audience, was, none-the-less, considered "spicy oriental fooling . . . with fragrant poetry and dramatic drive . . . packed with humor, gorgeous and galvanic."251

By the end of the 1927-1928 season the Goodman had seemingly established itself as a worthy American art theatre. Financially in the red, it was artistically showing profits and had survived minor internal crises and changes in the staff and the Repertory Company. The Studio had expanded its children's theatre program and provided new faces for the Repertory group in Art Smith and Roberta Louden. Varied plays of noncommercial status had been mounted by the Goodman for its Chicago audiences; experiments in


251 Stevens, "'Little Clay Cart' Packed With Human Mirth."
writing, acting, staging, and technical work had been attempted and, in most instances, favorably acclaimed. The Studio wing's increased matinee performances, introduced in January, 1928, had utilized the professional assistance of Peter Macfarlane, Whitford Kane, and Stevens.²⁵²

The achievements of the Goodman were seemingly multiple and in accordance with the aims of its founders. Drama of international flavor was tasted in the works of Galsworthy, Kaiser, Molière, O'Casey, Romain Rolland, Luigi Chiarelli, Ibsen, and King Shudraka. New plays, American revivals, Shakespeare, and other classics filled the Goodman stage. The acting company which the critics had thought less than truly professional in the early performances had greatly improved. Audiences in both St. Louis, Missouri, and Chicago had apparently enjoyed productions by the Goodman Repertory. Academically, the Goodman Theatre and Drama Department of the Art Institute in cooperation with the University of Chicago had increased its course offerings and provided guest lectures for its students.²⁵³


²⁵³ Letter from Frank Huburt O'Hara, University of Chicago, to Robert Harshe, June 27, 1927.
Financially, the Goodman was not completely successful. Inasmuch as the theatre was not designed necessarily as a money making venture it was on solid ground; however, as the $5,000 annual endowment plus the box office receipts did not meet its expenses, the Goodman was a financial drain on the Art Institute.

Apparently the successes outweighed the financial failure, and by 1928, three years after its opening, the Goodman Theatre was becoming a trademark in the city of Chicago. Patrons, critics, cab-drivers, and policemen were affectionately calling the Goodman "the sub-way theatre," the "Tom Sawyer theatre," the "subterranean theatre," the "lakeside theatre," the "granite place," and the "mausoleum." 254

Although the general directing at the Goodman Theatre over the three year period had gained control and freedom from constraint, Stevens had always worked with "ease, interest and sureness." 255

In an interview, April, 1928, Stevens exhibited the same confidence as he commented on the policies and progress of the Goodman Theatre.


Of the repertoire system practiced at the Goodman Stevens said:

Players work better when they are accustomed to each other. That's what repertoire means -- a number of people together, familiar with a number of plays . . . able, with only a few rehearsals, to put on any one of them.²⁵⁶

On the selection of plays, he noted:

We don't want to do anything that's to be done in commercial theaters in Chicago. I like to do a percentage of new plays each season along with classics and international dramas. We do not want to do anything for the sake of sensation. I have no aversion to doing what is called a sex play, provided sex is not stressed above other values.²⁵⁷

As for the experimentation, Stevens felt that the opportunity for attempting the new in scenery, lighting, costumes, music, sound, and acting was golden at the Goodman. Adventure into the past with stylized acting or melodramatic emoting was also a worthy adventure.

His final comment on business expressed his belief that all was well and well worth the price:

Business is great! Week by week this season has shown a substantial increase over last season.

²⁵⁶Ibid. Ashton Stevens commented in "Ibsen History Is Made at Goodman," Chicago Herald and Examiner, March 24, 1928, "It is time somebody told Thomas Wood Stevens . . . that his first nights, due to too brief a time of rehearsal, are invariably an injustice to the play, the players, and the place."

²⁵⁷Virginia Dale, "Speaking of Plays and Players."
[However,] we must watch our corners very closely. Our studio wing is a constant drag on our finances, and always will be. But we feel that out of the group some fine talent is sure to come.\textsuperscript{258}

After three years the Goodman Theatre, an American art theatre, apparently had made an impact on the American theatre scene.

\textsuperscript{258}Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

STEVENS’ FINAL YEARS AT THE GOODMAN, 1928-1930

During the first three years of its existence the Goodman Theatre, under the direction of Thomas Wood Stevens, achieved notable success. The numbers of people who attended the Goodman performances increased, and reporters attested to the aesthetic value of the venture with favorable comments.

Critics, accustomed to commercial productions of a purely entertainment nature, began to accept the Goodman for what it was, an experimental theatre. At first many writers found fault with the skill of the performers and openly criticized the choice of plays. Reviews frequently compared the Goodman presentations to those of traveling companies which offered Broadway hits and found, by comparison, the Goodman lacking in entertainment and polish. By the 1928-1929 season, however, reviewers were offering compliments to the Goodman for its efforts in presenting lesser known plays, plays by unknown writers, plays of international prestige, and plays which displayed new trends in the theatre performed with skill and artistry.

The Goodman, perhaps better known in Europe, where art theatres were more fashionable, than in America, was gaining
respect and stature as an art institution in the United States. The sizes of the audiences at the Goodman increased. Patrons of the theatre and related arts were verbally supportive of Goodman's seasonal bills. Correspondence attests to the appreciation and enjoyment of the productions experienced by members of the audiences. The demand for more and diversified performances caused both repertory and studio productions to be expanded in numbers and scope.

Stevens' dream of an art theatre seemed to have become a reality. More than offering mere entertainment, the theatre, to Stevens, had a larger design. It was, if his oral and written concepts are accepted as honest statements, a vehicle whose responsibility was to widen the horizons and experiences of its audiences. Not necessarily a tool for social reform, the theatre was to serve as a link between the past and the present, to provide universal views of humanity, to span national boundaries, and to surmount language barriers. The theatre, to Stevens, was not just a toy of the dilettante but rather an art discipline to be exemplified by dedicated and trained personnel. The theatre was not to remain static. It was to experiment, to test, perhaps to falter, and to try again. The theatre was an institution, according to Stevens, familiar to all societies. And as such, the theatre was an instrument which
represented mankind and could bring man to a closer understanding of
man when operated in an artistically oriented environment.

By the 1929-1930 season the Goodman seemed well on its
way to accomplishing its goals. However, just as the work at
Goodman began to show appreciable returns, financial and aesthetic,
titanic problems infringed on the operational policies of the
institution and snowballed into insurmountable obstacles. Money
worries had plagued the Art Institute since the beginning of the
Goodman, but nothing had ever developed into such a pressing
burden that the Goodman could not resolve the problem equitably and
continue to follow the format established by Stevens.

During the 1929-1930 season not only the Goodman but the
nation as well faced financial bankruptcy. The crash of 1929 created
economic ripples that grew into waves of destruction for the Goodman.
The catastrophe foreshadowed doom and eventual death for Stevens'
Goodman. The Theatre Committee, composed of businessmen,
wanted financial stability above everything else. The panic for
survival seemed to have erased all original contractual promises
made to Stevens. Forgotten, apparently, were the Goodman's
purposes, its contributions, its progress, and its excellence.
The Committee wanted the Goodman to make money.
Stevens, aware of the Theatre Committee's stand, offered numerous solutions and compromises, all of which seemingly fell on deaf ears. No amount of discussion or compromising proposals seemed to appease the committee. The situation became enigmatic. Harsh words, accusations, and, apparently, slight undermining by a Goodman staff member brought the situation to an impasse. Stevens was forced to make a decision. He could either compromise his standards and alter the course of the Goodman to fit the guidelines set forth by the Committee, or he could resign.

In April, 1930, two months before he had completed five full years as director of the Goodman Theatre, Stevens offered the Institute his resignation. Unable to negate all the concepts in which he believed or accept a pseudo-director position, Stevens left Goodman and with him all but two of the company. The pride and the fulfillment of the numerous achievements and successful maturity of the Goodman became agonizing heartbreak and retreat for Stevens.

The rift and separation made headlines not only in Chicago but in centers throughout the theatre world. Chicagoans, generally close-mouthed and unsupportive, openly took sides in the conflict. Major critics and theatre patrons were unrestrained in expressing their displeasure and disagreement with the Institute's position and
Stevens' resignation. But at the close of the 1930 season Stevens vacated his position as director of the Goodman Theatre, the theatre which had drawn him away from Carnegie Tech and had promised to be, and for a time was, the crystallization of Stevens' art theatre.

GOODMAN THEATRE 1928-1929 SEASON


Staff members for the season were Thomas Wood Stevens, Head of the Department, B. Iden Payne, Head of the Studio, Cloyd Head, Manager, Charles Schlesinger, Assistant Stage Manager, Arvid Crandall, Lighting, Gordon Ray, Assistant Electrician, Leslie Marzolf, Scene Designer, Don Ament, Assistant Scene Designer, Julia LeVine, Music, Muriel Brown, Children's Theatre.

¹Goodman Theatre, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.
and Elizabeth Parsons, Costume Design. The repertory company included: B. Iden Payne, Mary Agnes Doyle, Ellen Root, Katherine Krug, Joan Madison, Bess Kathryn Johnson, Bernard Ostertag, Roberta Louden, Lucille Colbert, Redmond Flood, Donald Willson, Whitford Kane, Neal Caldwell, Roman Bohnen, Russell Spindler, Art Smith, Lester Luther, Lawrence Paquin, Arvid Crandall, F. Leon Ford, and Ray Jones.²

As noted in the Art Institute of Chicago Announcement to Members, the 1928-1929 season would present repertory performances every evening except Sunday, with matinees Friday at 2:15. Studio performances would be given occasionally at Thursday matinees, and Children's Theatre would offer twenty-four matinees on twenty-four consecutive Saturdays at 2:30 p.m., beginning November 17, 1928, with "Christopher Robin and Winnie-the-Pooh."³

Endorsements in the bulletin noted that the Goodman had offered Chicago ",... a more distinguished program of plays than any commercial manager had sent there, "and that the Goodman, which "tries not to stand still," had the potentials of a permanent

²Ibid.
³Ibid.
repertory theatre worthy of Chicago and of "... middle western culture ... and should receive support."^4

"The Little Clay Cart" which closed Goodman's 1927-1928 bill opened the 1928-1929 season. The naive Hindu drama, staged once again by Cloyd Head, received plaudits. Reporter C. J. Bulliet felt that Head's direction of the 1500 year old comedy was consistent and his use of stylization was never overdone. But more impressive than Head's direction, wrote C. J. Bulliet in the Chicago Evening Post, October 9, 1928, was the introduction of newcomers Joan Madison and Donald Willson. According to the writer, the drama offered Miss Madison the opportunity to display a "mellow enticing voice and a supple physikue [sic] which she used to create a superior character creation," and Willson showed fluidity of movement even though his delivery was at times monotonous.

Although the newspapers found "The Little Clay Cart" apparently a pleasant production, the rehearsals for the performance were anything but pleasant. The only letter found in the Stevens Collection which described discontentment among the actors was one written by the Goodman repertory company about


^5C. J. Bulliet, "Goodman Season Arrives Aboard 'Little Clay Cart'" Chicago Evening Post, October 9, 1928.
the rehearsals for "The Little Clay Cart." The company complained
of Head's weak and indecisive directing of the show. To wit the
company felt: Head had no idea of what he wanted; only through
the trial and error method were speeches or stage business set,
only to be reset at the next rehearsal; a final shaping of the
production was reached by the company's working out the puzzle
outside of regular rehearsal time; the directorial method of Head
was exhausting and worthless. The company's letter concluded:

We hope, therefore, that we will not be compelled
to march through the slough of another production
under Mr. Head's direction.  

In spite of Head's wife's persuasive and explanatory letter to
Stevens asking for his understanding and continued support of
her husband as a director, Head was removed from directorial
duties but retained in the position of financial manager of the
Goodman.

Of the next production, 'Inspector General,' a writer for
the Chicago Evening American, November 7, 1928, considered
B. Iden Payne's mounting a creditable success of a difficult work,
a work which Payne directed and in which he served as leading man.
The reporter noted that director Payne's projection of a Russian
atmosphere was more than satisfactory while his acting was

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^Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Goodman Theatre
Company, October, 1928.

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"charming, graceful and interesting." Similarly, Payne's direction of the Goodman's following production, James Barrie's "Dear Brutus," was called "more than satisfactory" by the Herald and Examiner, December 4, 1928.

Stevens' interpretation of Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an Author," received numerous comments. Perhaps the play itself, which opened January 7, 1929, caused most of the furor. Critic Ashton Stevens felt the whole thing was "enormously funny in a highly cerebral way . . . the incongruities convulsing," and Bulliet of the Post considered Pirandello's tragic comedy didactic with characters "who bore us stiff." Writer Virginia Dale thought "Six Characters" was a "work composed in the rarefied air of Special Thinkers . . . a worthy choice for our established players of repertoire, since it has both originality and wit and would find hard sledding on the solely commercial stage."


Finally, Margaret Mann Crolius of the *Chicago Daily News* noted that Pirandello's piece was "quite unusual and delectable. Chicago owes much to the Goodman for interesting and brilliant experimentation."  

Stevens' plan to introduce new and untried scripts and to mount experimental and foreign dramas received recognition during the 1928-1929 season. Goodman's next production was a new American comedy "Lizard Comedy" which was "a lotta fun" and a vivid contrast to the following production of Ibsen's "When We Dead Awaken," a play of "scenic splendor of lost illusions."  

The writer of "The Optimist" column for the *Chicago Daily Times* felt Ibsen's drama, as presented by the Goodman, was a production of "no small proportions" that wisely followed the author's suggested mood and "emblematized rather than acted the lines."  

Of Goodman's final three presentations, "The Critic," the double bill "The Shadow of the Gunman" and "The Island of Saints and How To Get Out of It," and "The Golem," Chicago audiences seemingly were partial to Sheridan's "The Critic." Critic Dale considered

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12 Virginia Dale, " 'When We Dead Awaken,' " *Chicago Daily Journal*, February 27, 1929.

13 The Optimist, " 'When We Dead Awaken,' " *Chicago Daily Times*, February 27, 1929.
the piece a howling hit and noted that the lively gait of the play was heightened by directorial tricks. The use of "a stage upon a stage, and an improvised box in which (stage) visitors are seated . . . " were different and loved by the audience.14 Play-goers' comments as they left the theatre after "The Critic" viewing included:

This was a wonderful play; it had something to learn in it.

This was a wonderful play; it had so much body to it. It was just as clever as it could be and it was well acted.

I enjoyed it as much as my neighbor did and he was nearly dying of laughter.15

The billing of April 10, 1929, combined St. John Ervine's "The Island of the Saints" and Sean O'Casey's "The Shadow of a Gunman," two Irish offerings, not new but "new to this hinterland . . . stark, unadulterated tragedy and quite beautiful in simplicity and perfect rightness. And the Goodman Company is at its top," so wrote Virginia Dale in the Chicago Daily Journal.16


15"How Did You Like It?," newspaper clipping, March 29, 1929, Stevens Collection.

An English premiere of a Yiddish stage masterpiece, "The Golem," closed the 1928-1929 season. Translated into English by J. C. Augenlicht, the production was directed by Stevens and David Itkin. Itkin, of the Habima Theatre in Moscow, had portrayed the rabbi in the Habima version of the play. His advice and assistance, Stevens thought, would lend authenticity to the production. Although the Goodman performance may have been authentic Hebrew drama some critics thought the affair was more theatre than drama. Writer Ashton Stevens remarked:

The frequently random and repetitive qualities of the piece were not mitigated by the slow paced acting with tormenting breathing spells between speeches but the thrill was in the piece, in the eight scenes that made its pictures and in the passionate playacting. 17

Writing in "The Stage," spring, 1929, Charles Collins classified "The Golem" as a production that displayed a professional grasp and art theatre invention. He felt that Chicagoans had witnessed a performance of a Jewish legend drama superior to those that might have been staged in New York, Paris, or Moscow. Of David Itkin, Collins said:

The Goodman was fortunate in securing Itkin to direct its 'Golem.' He has racemarked it; it has brought out a performance that is thoroughly felt and understood by the players in terms of

17 Ashton Stevens, "Real Thrill Even If It Lacks Pace," Chicago Herald and Examiner, May 8, 1929.

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the play's heredity. He has, moreover, caused marked improvements in the Goodman technique of managing crowd scenes.\textsuperscript{18}

By the close of the 1928-1929 season critics and viewers were seemingly grasping and appreciating Goodman's catholic and unusual offerings. There was apparent support and approval of the productions. One reviewer, Frederick Donaghey, however, was usually a detractive writer who consistently found major flaws in Goodman's presentations. When a colleague nicknamed him a professional Goodman-hater and Goodman-baiter he defended his position. In his own defense Donaghey wrote:

I should like to have the Goodman Memorial succeed in all senses of the verb. However, the reason for well wishing may be dismissed as merely sentimental. But, then, I should like it if Chicago possessed a popular playhouse devoted to works not reasonably within the calculations of what are termed 'commercial managers'. . . .

But I do not believe the best way for The Tribune to help the management of the Goodman Memorial to get on toward such an ideal is to say that the ideal has already been achieved. What good is served by praising a play, an exhibition of acting, or a chore in directing that is not good?\textsuperscript{19}

Although writer Donaghey apparently saw little of magnitude in the Goodman, in general, Chicago theatre reporters,


\textsuperscript{19}F. Donaghey, The Chicago Tribune, newspaper clipping, February, 1929, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.
according to news releases, seemingly felt the Goodman was striving for artistic perfection. Reviews were more complimentary, with favorable remarks outweighing unfavorable comments, by the end of Goodman's fourth full season. Seemingly by the spring of 1929 the Goodman had by action as well as word evidenced itself as a respectable, dedicated, and well-grounded art theatre.

GOODMAN THEATRE. 1929-1930 SEASON

After a summer touring Europe and researching material for his book *The Theatre From Athens to Broadway*, (published in January, 1932,) Stevens resumed his work at Goodman in late August. Except for a minor change in the staff, the operational procedures of the Goodman remained the same. The roster of directors altered. A vacancy left by Cloyd Head, now a full-time business manager, was filled by Hubert Osborne, another of Stevens' colleagues from Tech.

Osborne was eager to join the Goodman staff and had written several letters seeking employment. Stevens' admonitions about slashed budgets at the Institute which had reduced budgets for productions and salaries did not alter Osborne's desire to join the organization. Stevens explained that the Budget Committee of the Institute had cut the company's budget some twenty thousand below
the budget established by the Theatre Committee because of a reduced tax fund share.²⁰

This financial loss forced Stevens to reduce the size of the repertory company. Productions of magnitude would be limited.

The Studio wing had been enlarged and greater emphasis was being given to teaching. Bluntly Stevens detailed the existing situation at Goodman:

Everybody wants to direct the Company, and let the students get what they can by walking on and watching; and for the next year this simply cannot be done. The usual result is that the Studio is left on my hands, and I am so burdened with executive details that I can not carry them. The Committee insists on my doing my share of the producing with the Company, mainly because I have had some of the lucky box office breaks. The truth is that we need help, and need it badly, in the Studio productions.

Will you be willing to do one Company production in the big theatre, one Company production in the small theatre, and dig in to make the Studio something . . . ? I believe there's a hard year ahead, and I'm going to be under heavier pressure than usual, and I don't want to sacrifice your enthusiasm and devotion to the game. I know I can offer no salary inducement, and mustn't be promising too much in other directions. You want to get back into an institutional theatre, and I want you back here. But next year, it's not possible to make it the free thing we like, with each man picking his play and doing it without much else on his mind.²¹

²⁰Letter to Hugh Osborne from Thomas Wood Stevens, June 6, 1929.
²¹Ibid.

The first repertory company's productions apparently gave no hint of financial problems either through the works selected or through the standards of staging. But money worries grew, and insufficient funds became a major crippler. Unable to freely choose scripts or to maintain technical finesse without completey depleting the energies and the pocketbooks of company members, the group grew restless. The entire company was affected. Money was needed; a solution to the financial impasse was imperative.

The solution to the problem had been suggested by Stevens two years prior to its acceptance. In 1927 Stevens had urged the

²²Goodman Theatre, Vol. 24, Stevens Collection.
Institute to establish a subscription plan thereby assuring the Goodman of both a steady income and a permanent audience. As Whitford Kane remarked:

The insufficient budget which was allowed Stevens caused him to choose his productions warily and conservatively. The Goodman, built as an experimental theatre, could not afford to experiment. . . . Mr. Stevens, knowing the need of a permanent audience for the theatre, had repeatedly urged a subscription plan.23

Although the Institute agreed to such a plan in the summer of 1929, the first productions of the fifth season did not receive noticeable benefits. The ingenuity of company member Roman Bohnen resulted earlier in the organization of a successful First-Night-Club, which assured a full house for every opening. However, neither the First-Night-Club nor the subscription plan relieved the financial burdens until the spring.

Even the spring dividends of the Subscription Plan and the First-Night-Club, although thwarting to a small degree the economic panic of the Theatre Committee and the Art Institute, could not offset the stock market crash of 1929. In spite of what had appeared the finest year for the Goodman, the fifth season of the Goodman was dismal insofar as the organization itself was concerned. The 1929 crash, although not outwardly seeming to have affected the

23Kane, pp. 275-76.
status of the Goodman, unnerved the Theatre Committee who "forgot what they had promised Thomas Wood Stevens back in 1925."24

The play bill went on as planned. Donaghey of The Chicago Tribune, his usual cautiousness still in evidence, wrote that the production of "Romeo and Juliet" was "handsomely costumed, placed in a sensible scenic frame, and acted as well at least as any of the other ventures, so far made in this theater (the Goodman) with Shakespeare."25 The Chicago Daily News' Amy Leslie considered the Goodman production "a reverent treatment of the lovely tragedy . . . worth while."26 Reporter Gail Borden felt Goodman's "Romeo and Juliet" was an "... ossified bit . . . just another bit of Shakespeare. Ambitious, 'tis true, but slumping badly."27 Apparently none of the three writers noted a slump or a scrimping in technical proficiency, and the money lack was not noticeable.

The next offering, Hubert Osborne's "The Makropoulos Secret," evidenced no financial slump, apparently, for it received

24Ibid., p. 277.

25F. Donaghey, "Theater," The Chicago Tribune, October 9, 1929.


plaudits for direction, acting, and skillful settings, highly modernistic and superb. Stevens' following production of son Alden's translation of Jules Verne's "Tour du Monde" earned wide acclaim for its perfection of performance and its imaginatively compressed writing. Although a seeming theatre success, "Tour du Monde" did not earn profitable box office returns. Presented December 17, 1929, "Tour du Monde" opened shortly after the stock market crash and may have been a victim of the times.

Certainly the bankruptcy of the nation affected the members of the Theatre Committee who apparently equated national financial disaster to low box office receipts and thereby the downfall of the Goodman. Immediately after the production of "Tour du Monde," according to the memos researched, harried notes passed between Director Harshe and Stevens. Harshe wanted to alter the play bill scheduled for the Goodman and substitute commercial offerings which would hopefully draw larger audiences. An increased box office return would afford one means of absorbing financial losses being experienced by Goodman.

Sometime in mid-December, 1929, a series of memos from the Theatre Committee indicated that the Committee was demanding the right to select plays for production. Play selection had never been the province of the Theatre Committee, a group of businessmen
who were unfamiliar with drama. Choosing scripts had been the strict domain of Stevens and his staff, personnel trained and knowledgable in theatre. This stipulation of authority was a primary factor considered in the founding of Goodman as an art, not a commercial, theatre.

The first indication of intrusion into Stevens' realm of authority was, it seems, an undated memorandum from Harshe who suggested that the Goodman try to get the New York success, "The Women Have Their Way." A second undated memo from Harshe presented Stevens with a list of suggested plays which he might consider. The list included: "The Queens Husband," "A Single Man," "Goat Song," and "Craig's Wife," which, according to Harshe, "... had been popular on the coast."  

Stevens' replies to Harshe's notes were unavailable. However, handwritten memos from the director of the Institute continued, and, finally, an official, typed inter-departmental correspondence vetoed Stevens' play selections and submitted instead scripts that, according to the Committee, were "sure fire." The play, "Good Hope," Harshe noted, was successfully produced

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in New York. He added, "Plenty of people like this kind of thing." Evidently Stevens did not agree to "Good Hope" and offered in its place "The Fire in the Opera House." His substitution was turned down flatly because, as the Committee noted in an undated memo, though clever and brilliant it was absolutely filthy and not fit for the Goodman.

By January 23, 1930, a tentative list of plays was handed to Stevens by the Theatre Committee. From that list Stevens was "admonished" to select two. The list of four, "Goose Hangs High," "The Silent House," "Holiday," and "Ariadne" apparently was the Committee's last word on the subject. Stevens chose, seemingly upon orders, "Holiday" and "Ariadne."

Such Committee action must have seemed high handed; it certainly was a breach of contract. Back in 1925 an agreement had been signed which gave Stevens the authority to select plays which would satisfy him and his staff in their endeavors to make Goodman a noncommercial theatre. Script selection, according to the contract, was to be left in his hands; decisions as to which plays were worthy were his to make as director of an organization which was attempting to uphold artistic standards.

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29Ibid., December 2, 1929.
These behind the scenes juggling did not affect the scheduled production of Paul Green's "The Field God" which opened its first professional run at the Goodman, January 28, 1930. One writer called it an "... interesting glimpse of a native writer's work," but saw the original script as both powerful and in need of pruning.\textsuperscript{30} Reporter Fritz Blocki thought the acting was superior but felt the script, "a drama of the soil," became "... too often expository instead of expletive, and the difference between these two is the dividing line between good drama and word-heavy playwriting."\textsuperscript{31}

"Holiday," one of the two plays Stevens selected from the Theatre Committee's list, as directed by Hubert Osborne won compliments for its entertainment value set with unobtrusive good taste. Critic Gail Gorden wrote of the production in the \textit{Chicago Daily Times}, February 20, 1930:

Undoubtedly it is an upward step for the Goodman players, whose feet have been so long held fast in the mire of 'arty' fly-paper.

In his February 20, 1930, column in the \textit{Chicago Herald and Examiner}, Ashton Stevens dubbed director Osborne as some kind of

\textsuperscript{30}Margaret Mann Crolius, "Goodman Stars Change Pace in 'The Field God'," \textit{Chicago Daily News}, January 29, 1930.

a miracle worker for "he is rapidly getting himself regarded in my
(Stevens) snobbish set as something of a wonder worker."

Apparently the decision to produce "Holiday" was a wise one. Critics reported favorably, and increased box office receipts attested to the increased numbers of viewers who attended this successful New York play called "the right comedy and the right direction." Perhaps the wonder-working of Osborne was, in reality, his offering a "sure fire" commercial hit, the very kind of show which Stevens felt already had a showcase in the commercial theatre and should be excluded from the Goodman stage.

The following mounting was a Payne-Stevens production of "The Rivals," a play that would probably make less money but was capable of producing as much hilarity and enjoyment as "Holiday." Goodman's presentation of the revival, one of the purposes for which the Goodman existed, received worthy reviews. Writer Collins commented that the classic comedy of Georgian manners severely tested the modern actor's ability to achieve elaborate style and mincing mannerisms. But, he noted:

These players earn their praise. Last night's premiere was a sound interpretation of this piece,

32Ashton Stevens, Chicago Herald and Examiner, February 20, 1930.
whose roles are encrusted with the traditions of vanished greatness.\textsuperscript{33}

From January until April no communications in the Stevens Collection indicate the growing friction and disagreement which existed between Stevens and the Theatre Committee. However, on April 11, 1930, three days after the opening of Osborne directed "Kolpak Must Dance," Stevens wrote a long letter to W. O. Goodman. In his letter Stevens referred to meetings, discussions, and arguments that had occurred between him and the Theatre Committee.

Apparently dissatisfaction over the policy of play selection had extended into the realm of operational policies and basic purposes of Goodman. The Committee evidently wanted to strip Stevens of his authority as Head of the Drama Department of the Goodman Memorial Theatre and supplant him with another staff member. Stevens was to remain as head of the Studio and titular head of the Goodman Theatre.

Disappointment and disbelief over the course of events were evident in Stevens letter to the senior Goodman. He wrote:

The Goodman Theatre should have a director . . . experienced, strong, and constructive. Now essential decisions are being made by Mr. Harshe

and Mr. Worcester, both admittedly inexperienced in such direction, and a Committee of the Trustees who give it little time and thought. The result cannot be good. And I can no longer see the ideas for which I believe the theatre should stand so completely defeated. 34

Stevens noted that he had been completely overlooked for advice since Cloyd Head had been given increased authority. Head's position as business manager had made no noticeable increase in ticket sales and had lost money for needed advertising. Furthermore, Stevens explained, both Head and the Committee were continually interfering with the theatre's artistic side.

The crux of Stevens' complaint was that no theatre could operate isolated from business interests, but, similarly, business ideas alone were of little value without qualified art direction in the Goodman project. Stevens noted that under his stewardship 1) the school had doubled in size, 2) a splendid stage staff had developed without interference from labor unions, no mean feat, and, 3) the public reached in the subscription plan was with the Goodman and its promises.

Professionally, Stevens commented in his letter of April 11, 1930, he had trained the best scene designer, the best light man, and the best construction man in any theatre. He improved the

34 Letter to W. O. Goodman from Thomas Wood Stevens, April 11, 1930.
company into a flexible and able nucleus; he produced a good many important plays that served the real public, the public, as noted in the organizational statements, that was more than just Lake Shore Drive.

The public, Stevens went on to explain, had been led to expect fine plays at the Goodman, and he seriously feared "that is not the intention of the Committee so to carry on." For example, after the commercial production "Holiday" Stevens suggested some serious plays. Harshe approved of none of them but did approve "Kolpak," without Stevens' recommendation. Next, Galsworthy's high comedy "Escape" was approved; however, Harshe did not approve Kane's directing it, and Kane was an authority on Galsworthy. Payne was away, so Stevens began work only to be "ordered" by the Committee to have Osborne direct it.

Stevens' lengthy letter noted that he protested that Osborne was not sympathetic to Galsworthy and had no association with his work. Nevertheless, Mr. Worcester "told me that this was an order and must be obeyed." Extended explanations of the situation made no impressions on Worcester who said:

35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
The Committee has decided that Osborne was to be used consecutively as producer and the facts made no difference. 37

As Stevens saw it the facts were clear. The real directing of the theatre was being taken out of the hands of experienced artists and placed in the hands of men who did not pretend to know anything about it. Such action was contrary to all that Goodman stood for. Stevens concluded that the Goodman, organized to present great or vital experimental plays, was now turning to trifling plays, not even new.

This isn't strong direction, and I am powerless in the matter. But the future of the Theatre as a great center of dramatic art, such as you and Mrs. Goodman hoped for . . . can only be assured under a director in whom the Institute has confidence, and who has confidence in the Institute. I have not their confidence now, and I'm afraid, as their decisions are running, they have not mine. But the thing I have worked for is very dear to me, and you and Mrs. Goodman . . . and I can do nothing to let go until you release me. 38

Stevens did not mail his letter of April 11, 1930. Instead he waited to write Goodman of his final decision on May 14, 1930. In the interim he apparently approached Harshe with offers that would resolve the impasse. According to the Stevens file, Stevens offered to reduce the number of productions, to produce worthy

37Ibid.
38Ibid.
plays that demanded little or no royalty, and to take a cut in salary, an offer that was endorsed by the company members also, if the Committee would permit a continuance of artistic productions under his direction.

The Committee's major interest was a high box return. If Stevens could create a favorable box office he could, said the Committee, have his own way in artistic matters. However, Mr. Worcester informed Stevens that future plays would be selected by the Committee even if subscriptions had been sold for "fine" plays. If Stevens could not agree to such an arrangement he was to handle the Studio, and other arrangements would be made for the Repertory productions. 39

With this ultimatum issued to him, Stevens, if he were to stay at Goodman, felt that he must compromise his ideals and his authority, a compromise which would most certainly jeopardize his goals for an art theatre.

On May 14, 1930, the same date that Stevens' final production "Escape" opened, he wrote to W. O. Goodman of his final decision to leave Goodman. Two weeks later, May 28, Stevens handed Harshe his official resignation which stated:

Confirming our conversation of two weeks ago, I am writing to make quite clear my position with regard to the theatre's policy for next year. I feel that I am hopelessly in disagreement with the Theatre Committee. I believe that the Goodman should be a true art theatre, and that it should devote itself to really important plays not otherwise to be seen in Chicago, and to new plays, with some emphasis on vital experiment. I believe it should only occasionally deal with the ordinary commercial play, and that it should not attempt to compete with the regular commercial theatre. I believe that the financial difficulties of the Goodman will be solved by the present subscription plan; but in so far as these subscribers are signing on the basis of the past five seasons I have grave doubts of the permanence of their interest, and my continued presence can only be misleading and embarrassing [sic] to my successor.

Therefore, I believe the only possible course for me is, with deep respect and every assurance of my personal regard, to leave the Theatre. 40

On the same day Stevens sent night letters to Edith R. Isaacs, Theatre Arts Monthly, Fritz Blocki, Chicago critic presently of New York, and John Mason Brown, New York Evening Post, advising them of his decision and requesting an early statement in their columns. 41

In spite of favorable reviews of Goodman's final production of the season, "Escape," called by Claudia Cassidy in the May 15,
1930, edition of the *Chicago Journal of Commerce* "... the best of the week's shows ... with simplicity, verve and considerable drive ... and acting that needs no apologies," the story of the hour was Stevens' resignation.

Within twenty-four hours after the breaking of the news, articles evaluating the situation appeared. The *Chicago Daily News*, May 29, 1930, headlined Tom Bashaw's column, "Broadway Versus Art." The article quoted Stevens who said:

> I cannot conscientiously stand by and see the policy of the Goodman theater changed so radically and still retain the reins. I would be untrue to my trust if I failed to register the disagreement I feel with the plan to replace art with Broadway for the sake of dollars. There has been no row -- there will be no row. I felt that my resignation was the only true way out, and I tendered my resignation.42

Numerous articles repeated Stevens' position as set forth in his letter of resignation. The *Chicago Evening Press* presented a running report of events, and The *Chicago Tribune* ran a feature article based on Stevens' list of plays staged at the Goodman during his regime. The figures disclosed how close the Goodman came to paying its own way during the five year period.43


43 Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Charles Collins, June 4, 1930. Figures requested by Collins are located in the Appendix.
a member of the company, spoke vehemently of the cheapness of
the whole situation and endorsed Stevens' decision not to support a
repertory of cheap vulgar plays. 44 Similarly, members Arvid
Crandall and Whitford Kane supported Ostertag's sentiments. And
Cloyd Head, the Business Manager of the Goodman, announced his
resignation stating that he found himself at odds with the policy of
the Goodman. 45

While Stevens' position was widely publicized the Theatre
Committee, W. O. Goodman, Mr. Worcester, Walter B. Smith,
Arthur T. Aldis, Walter S. Brewster, and Percy B. Eckhart, re­
mained silent. The only member reached, Walter S. Brewster,
"merely intimated that art was not to be entirely sacrificed. " 46
Director Harshe stated in an undated newspaper article, "Director
Quits in Goodman Theater Row," found in Volume 24 of the Stevens
Collection, that the Institute regretted losing Stevens for his five
years at the Goodman represented distinguished achievement.
Harshe further noted that Hubert Osborne would succeed Stevens as
director and had the authority to direct the company and its policy
for the Committee had full faith in his ability to carry on.

44 "Goodman Theater Forsaking Ideals," Chicago Evening

45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
Hubert Osborne remained, but the majority of the repertory company resigned along with Stevens. Those who left were B. Iden Payne, Whitford Kane, Leslie Marzolf, Arvid Crandall, Neal Caldwell, Roman Bohnen, Bernard Ostertag, Bess Kathryn Johnson, Elizabeth Parsons, Ellen Root, Charles Schlesinger, Mary Agnes Doyle, Dorothy Raymond, Harry Marvis, Harriet Wapp, Lawrence Paquin, George Storm, Francis Brownlow, and Gordon Ray. 47

After the initial shock of Stevens' action ebbed articles appeared offering rationales for actions taken by the Institute. Writer Gail Borden pointed out in "Art? Profit? Neither?", newspaper clipping dated June 30, 1930, in Volume 24 of the Stevens Collection:

What the director thought would be a playhouse devoted entirely to those so-called 'finer endeavors' turns out to be a half-way affair jockeying between pseudo-professionalism and super-amateurism.

Borden concluded that the Goodman had not been successful financially or artistically; but she criticized the governing body of the Institute who let depressions, tempaments, and critics so drastically change

47Ibid. The names of the two who remained with the Goodman were not given, and a list of the 1929-1930 personnel was not available. Doris Williams remained as secretary to the Drama Department and corresponded frequently with Stevens. Correspondence, Vol. 13, Stevens Collection.
their governing notions. The Chicago Evening Post's C. J. Bulliet agreed in his June 3, 1930, column with the Committee's decisions. He determined that the Committee was justified with the financial annoyances of the Goodman, which, with all its dedication, had been an artistic failure distinctly behind the commercial theatre of Chicago's loop. Finally, Bulliet bemoaned the loss of superior scenic building and lighting as well as the fact that Stevens was no miracle worker, "for it would take a miracle man to put across things like the Goodman Theatre."

Reports, analyses, evaluations, and suggestions regarding the Goodman affair appeared in newspapers, magazines, and letters from July through October.\(^48\) Eleanor Jewett for The Chicago Sunday Tribune reiterated that the purposes of Goodman had been to have a school of acting, a noncommercial theatre, a testing ground for drama, and a working body of fine artists. The public, she contended, could not but be awed and impressed by the accomplishments of those goals. She concluded:

There is no little theater in the world that equals it. It ranks with the best on both sides of the Atlantic.\(^49\)

\(^{48}\)Volumes 13 and 24, Stevens Collection.

An anonymous letter that appeared in the June 8, 1930, Chicago Sunday Tribune asserted that Goodman had been a success but failed because of meddling people who gave little money and much advice.

After Jewett's first article she wrote a series of features that were follow ups. In the June 15, 1930, Chicago Sunday Tribune she asked for continued support of the Goodman that art theatre might continue in Chicago. In the same Sunday edition of The Tribune an unknown writer called on Harshe to outline the "real reasons" for Stevens' retirement if the stated new policy of Goodman was to be a continuance of expounding "... art theatre and not commercial clap-trap."

Again on June 22, Jewett pointed out that the important issue involved in Stevens' resignation was that his action indicated a change of attitude in the Art Institute, a question of standards and ideals versus profit. She deplored the obvious emphasis on profit. Because of Jewett's article many subscriptions were cancelled. She acclaimed the action as, in her opinion, a public showing of a desire for the Institute to reevaluate its position and keep the Goodman operating at a high level. In the July 13, 1930, Chicago Sunday Tribune, Jewett reported that 144 letters had reached the newspaper.

office. Writers of 143 letters asked for a return of the old regime at Goodman; one letter upheld the change. The majority of the letters received by The Chicago Sunday Tribune indicated that the sentiments of the writers were with Stevens.

The letters apparently did not sway the Institute. Jewett recorded that she had attended a conference with a Mr. Kelley, Head of the Art School, Mr. Harshe, and Mr. Logan. During the meeting, according to Jewett, Kelley stated of the Goodman upheaval:

Acting is rather an idling profession. It attracts all kinds. There are bad spots in every company—soft spots that should be weeded out.51

Jewett surmised that the recent outing, in the eyes of the Institute, had been looked upon as a weeding process.

Perhaps the Institute considered Stevens as a soft spot, but his departure from the Goodman was not an action that disgraced him, rather his resignation apparently brought him increased prestige throughout the theatre world. Letters, found in Volume 13 of the Stevens Collection, testify to the support and encouragement offered by friends, educators, and colleagues. Letters came from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, New York City, and the west coast, to mention a few. Most often the writers lamented the calamity that had befallen Stevens

while offering appreciation of his honest, real, and inspired work at Goodman. 52

An article in the July, 1930, issue of *Theatre Arts Monthly* noted that there was probably no city in the country more difficult in which to experiment than Chicago. Stevens' attempt to direct a theatre which wanted to create its own audience and its own plays had the Chicago attitude to reckon with. The piece concluded that Stevens happened to be "...one of the really creative pioneers in every branch of the Tributary Theatre -- a playwright and critic, a fine director, an extraordinary teacher. Which makes the situation a pretty problem in the art of theatre." 53

An article in *The New York Times*, June 2, 1930, quoted Neal Caldwell and Whitford Kane. Caldwell stated:

If the Goodman is going to turn commercial, I'd just as soon take my chance with Broadway. I am sorry about the whole new policy. The others don't seem to realize we've tried all that. We were working definitely for a theatre . . . for important plays. They want a theatre which will please everybody . . . It is ironic that the Art Institute should take the art out of its theatre. 54

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52*Correspondence*, Vol. 13, Stevens Collection.

53*Theatre Arts Monthly*, (July, 1930), 542.

Kane noted, seemingly paraphrasing while changing the emphasis of a disgruntled Goodman fan who had addressed himself to The Chicago Sunday Tribune, June 8, 1930, "All fine-arts theatres fail where there are meddling people who give little money and less advice." 55

With the exodus of Stevens and most of the company, the Goodman revamped itself under Hubert Osborne's direction. The 1930-1931 season opened the repertory performances with "The Firebrand" which reporter Lloyd Lewis in the Chicago Daily News, October 15, 1930, called "... not quite caviar." The Goodman Theatre closed at the end of the 1931 season, permanently, with Maugham's "The Sacred Flame." The cause of the death of Goodman repertory company was said to be "by the doctors in attendance (the trustees and executives of the Art Institute)..." a deficit on the season's activities. 56

For Stevens the Goodman had died the previous year. The very goals on which Goodman had been founded had, in Stevens' view, ceased to exist. Perhaps some good had come from Stevens' resignation, however. The usual apathetic Chicago public had taken sides in the controversy, a rare happening for the citizens of the

55 Ibid.

windy city who generally "... treated artistic matters with the lightest concern." And Stevens, the whole artist, had perhaps revitalized his position in American theatre.

Interested citizens, after reviewing in retrospect the Goodman affair, pondered the Institute's belated remarks that actually "an analysis of the situation revealed the fact that many of the plays produced did not appeal to the public and that the quality of the performances was inadequate." One writer considered the Institute's sudden concern for entertainment value and improved acting. The writer, Whitford Kane, commented that for four and a half years the productions had been deemed worthy, of real value, and fitting the goals established by the Goodman. Why, he wondered, the abrupt change? According to the reporter, it was not Stevens who had faltered in his course. He wrote:

Mr. Stevens' regime commenced with Galsworthy's The Forest, and ended with Escape, another play by that author. Escape, a fitting title for the close of five pioneering years. When it came to the question of resigning with Mr. Stevens, the last lines of Galsworthy's fine play brought much comfort to all of us. 'It's one decent self one can't escape.' That's it.

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57 Kane, p. 278.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid., p. 281.
CHAPTER V

STEVENS AFTER GOODMAN, 1930-1942

After Stevens resigned from the Goodman Theatre in May, 1930, he served in many areas and numerous capacities in American theatre. He was a critic-judge for theatre tournaments, lectured to various dramatic organization, wrote and directed several pageants, directed the Little Theatre of St. Louis and the Bonstelle Theatre Company in Detroit, Michigan, free-lanced in writing and painting, published his book *The Theatre From Athens to Broadway*, co-organized and directed the Globe Theatre Company, 1934-1939, served as a regional director for the Federal Theatre, 1935-1936, under Hallie Flanagan, assisted in the organization of theatre groups in Boston, Denver, and Philadelphia, and taught at the Universities of Michigan, Iowa, Arizona, and Stanford. His efforts in behalf of American theatre extended to active participation in the National Fine Arts Conference, the National Theatre Conference, and the Southwest Theatre Conference.

During the period from 1930 to 1942 Stevens apparently continued his diversified activities in drama as those endeavors...
expressed, as far as possible, his somewhat pioneering views of art theatre in America, quietly and without fuss. Melvin White wrote in "Thomas Wood Stevens, Memorial Issue," Educational Theatre Journal, December, 1951, "Thomas Wood Stevens wrote as he lived, quietly and with dignity, and always with that slight touch of kindly humor . . . . " and data seem to indicate that although others spoke harshly and wrote both critically and deviously about the treatment Stevens received at Goodman, Stevens, aware of the polemics caused by the Goodman affair, unpretentiously presented statistics supporting his side of the argument and apparently refused to be drawn into a debate over personalities, ideals, and purposes. Occasional remarks in his personal correspondence hint at a deep hurt and discouragement over the upheaval, but entries in the Calendar suggest that the greatest real anguish resulted from the accompanying economic problems and, at times, seemingly directionless labor.

His talent for writing and his ability as an artist afforded him needed income and additional outlets. In the twelve years after his resignation from Goodman he published numerous articles, short stories, and plays. Short editions of Shakespeare's comedies, "Tour du Monde," "I Confess," "Joan of Arc," "Camille in Roaring Camp," and "Westward Under Vega" were among his better known
works. He contracted for murals and sold sketches and paintings, his "Aspens Glorious," painted in 1939, a favorite.

But the major sources of his income and his artistic satisfaction were free-lance writing, directing, and teaching. Stevens rejected offers to work on the professional stage in New York, but in turn was rejected by the Selection Committee of the University of Illinois as possible head of the theatre department at that institution. The reasons given by the committee were that he was neither listed in Who's Who nor carried the proper academic credentials. At any rate, even without a prestigious listing, a steady source of income, or a definitive locale in which to both express his concepts of theatre and utilize his experience and talent, it appears his knowledge, ability, reputation were not wasted for he continued to gain prestige, to contribute to American theatre, and to touch many people until his death in January, 1942.

Stevens' immediate concern after his resignation was employment for himself and the members of the repertory company who left Goodman with him. Correspondence shows he investigated the possibility of group work with the Repertory Theatre of Boston under the directorship of Mrs. Henry Jewett. ¹

¹Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Mrs. Henry Jewett, August 18, 1930.
Stevens reported to the company that he and Mrs. Jewett could reach no satisfactory partnership arrangements. Apparently, pressured by immediate needs, the group separated and found employment individually for no correspondence or Calendar entries indicate further referrals to the old repertory company per se.

As for Stevens, he undertook a three year enterprise to research, write, produce, and direct the Oberlin Pageant in Ohio, a project which was cancelled, however, because of the depression. During the remainder of 1930, while Stevens filled orders for mural decorations and wrote articles, poems, and plays, concerned supporters of Stevens in the Goodman plight continued to work for a reorganization of Goodman under his leadership.

Roman Bohnen led the movement to reinstate the old Goodmanites. He planned to sever the Goodman repertory company from the Art Institute and call the new group Chicago's Repertory Company. They would perform in the Goodman Theatre and be underwritten by Chicago's citizenry. Furthermore, the reorganization program would include using Hubert Osborne, the current director of the theatre, in a move to "facilitate his

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2 Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Roman Bohnen, August 5, 1930.
capitulation . . .:³ such action would be for the welfare of all concerned. The plan was rejected by the President of the Art Institute Theatre Committee, Mr. Worcester, who saw it as totally unacceptable. He said:

If I [Bohnen] was so almighty interested in the welfare of the theatre I would and should come back next season, so the public would see the same faces on the stage, and therefore feel that everything was all right. I made it quite clear that my active service would start when his control stopped.⁴

No letters or other communications show any further action to implement a reorganization of the old Goodman repertory company. Evidently, for all practical purposes, Stevens' organization was finished.⁵ Stevens went to New York to work with The Players and to free-lance in literary and artistic endeavors. Colleagues who knew of his plight offered letters of encouragement and suggested possible positions. A letter from Irving Fichel dated December 5, 1930, tendered Stevens the directorship of the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara, California. He declined the position.

Early in 1931 Stevens agreed to move back into educational theatre accepting a summer position on the theatre staff at the

³Ibid.
⁴Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Roman Bohnen, August 12, 1930.
⁵The Goodman Theatre ceased to exist in the spring of 1931. According to Bohnen's letter, August 5, 1930, one of the causes of the demise was Osborne's moral reputation.
University of Michigan. For three summers 1931, 1932, and 1933, he was a guest director and instructor for courses and activities in drama. According to Valentine Windt, a member of the permanent faculty and director of dramatics at the University of Michigan, Stevens "... exerted an influence upon the production of plays" by establishing "new standards for scenery and costumes and new concepts for the direction of plays for visual and aural beauty." 6

Stevens' work with the Michigan Repertory Players, a young and inexperienced group with only three years behind it, resulted in productions seemingly received favorably. "Paola and Francesca," "The Chalk Circle," and "All's Well. That Ends Well" received more comment than his "Don Juan," "Alison's House," "Mr. Pim Passes By," "Hippolytus," "Camille in Roaring Camp," "Tour du Monde," "The Trojan Women," and "The Servant of Two Masters."

"Paola and Francesca," presented by the Goodman Group in 1923 and 1927, was called a masterpiece of "mental imagery" in which Stevens exercised over his principals "rare restraint which means all the difference between a story of love spun in fine, clear

crystal, and merely a vulgar display of physical factors in the make-up of man and his woman. "7

"The Chalk Circle" with its vivid blacks, reds, greens, and golds, symmetrically balanced set designs, and elaborate Chinese masks prompted George A. Stauter to interview Stevens. The reporter was both amazed and impressed by the stylized beating of a woman character. Stevens commented that "The Chalk Circle," a Chinese classic written in the Yuan dynasty, was an example of authentic Chinese stage customs in which such matters as beatings and poisonings were handled with grace. Accordingly, noted the director, if western audiences would accept such eastern conventions the classic work could be appreciated on its own terms. 8

Stevens' production of "The Servant of Two Masters" offered an example of modified Commedia dell'Arte, and "All's Well That Ends Well," presented in the summer of 1933, was only the second performance of this Shakespearean play in the United States. Stevens staged the American premier of "All's Well," "barring the performance of Mr. Kemble's Play of the same name in Boston in the Year


Reviewers called the Michigan Repertory Players' performance a "distinct departure from American tradition," and noted that "All's Well" was not impossible to produce, as some had said, for director Stevens staged the drama with ease and distinction. 10

In his "Visiting Professor" article, Michigan colleague Valentine Windt praised Stevens' skill not only on the stage but in the classroom. As a lecturer and scholar Stevens brought erudition to his classes and alleviated doubts as to the academic respectability of theatre courses throughout the campus. As a man of abundant knowledge and artistry with a "human touch" and "iron beneath his gentleness," Stevens' dignity, sensitivity, and dedication to his work at the University of Michigan widened horizons and offered challenging avenues to those "who had the good fortune to be there at the times of his visits." 11

While Stevens spent his summers of 1931, 1932, and 1933 in Michigan at the university he directed the Little Theatre of St. Louis


11Windt, 317.
during the theatre seasons of 1931-1932 and 1932-1933. His associate director in St. Louis was Neal Caldwell, formerly of both the Goodman and Carnegie Tech. The two men, jointly or individually, staged eleven productions, one-third of which had been offered at the Goodman, others staged at the University of Michigan, three imports, and two originals. The list included: "The Makropoulos Secret," "Escape," "The Chalk Circle," "Gas," "Alison's House," Molnar's "The Good Fairy," Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple," Shakespeare's "All's Well That Ends Well," and two originals, "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and "Gallows Gate." 12

The Little Theatre introduced Stevens to their subscribers as "the foremost figure in the little theatre movement in the United States. The little theatre is not to him a competitor with the commercial theatre, nor is it under any necessity merely to repeat the successes of Broadway. It is essentially an experimental theatre interested in the drama as an art, free to produce plays for their own sake, and prizing the stage primarily as a means of communicating the culture of one time to another." 13

12 Programs, Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.

The announcement seemingly capsuled Stevens' views of the theatre, at least his theatre. His years of dedication to and work in the field of drama apparently had not altered his concepts of the goals of theatre. And the subscription plan followed by the Little Theatre seemed to harmonize with Stevens' idea that a theatre needs to be underwritten by its audiences. The major difference between the operational plan at the Goodman Theatre and the Little Theatre of St. Louis seems to have been the acting company. No references allude to the Little Theatre's company being one of trained theatre personnel. Rather the programs indicate variety in the performing group with no known names. There was a nucleus of actors which performed repeatedly, much like the practice of any little theatre organization, but apparently none of the members was a vocationally theatre oriented person. On this last count Stevens was seemingly thwarted in attempting to maintain his standards of art theatre.  

Newspapers clippings in the Stevens Collection indicate that the productions, selections and performances were highly acclaimed and well acted. The St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 7, 1932, called "The Chalk Circle" dazzling, and the St. Louis Globe

14Ibid.
Democrat of the same date described the performance as a "triumph," "carefully produced," "thoroughly coached," "very queer and Chinese," and "impressive." The National Playwriting Contest sponsored by the Little Theatre selected "My Country 'Tis of Thee" the winner in 1932. Stevens mounted the original work, considered "finely staged" and worthy of the professional stage.\(^\text{15}\) The St. Louis Post Dispatch, December 2, 1932, noted nothing grand about Stevens' production of "Gas" except that it seemed too "high brow drama, neither very entertaining nor instructive or, indeed hardly a play, but the rather tangled novelty of its style will quite likely, appeal to a strictly arty audience."

Possibly the performance of "All's Well That Ends Well" afforded St. Louis audiences their greatest excitement. Dr. William G. B. Carson and Stevens, both considered astute students of dramatic history, were convinced that the Little Theatre's production was the first in America. The Little Theatre's literary research team found no evidence that the play, "a story that was taboo on the American stage up to recent years . . .,"\(^\text{16}\) had played in this country. Odell Shepherd, historian of the American stage, and

\(^{15}\)St. Louis Post Dispatch, April 8, 1932.

\(^{16}\)Homer Bassford, "'All's Well That Ends Well' Next At Little Theatre," St. Louis Star, April 22, 1933.
archivists of Harvard's collection of theatrical literature, revealed no other complete presentation in the United States. 17

The only record of a performance, and certainly no model to follow, was supplied by Otis Skinner who found that an incomplete reading of the play was done in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1789. 18

The Stevens' production, complete in its multitude of scenes and lengthy dialogue, reported the St. Louis Globe Democrat, May 5, 1933, "manifested a marked understanding of classic drama achieving altogether worthy results without precedent to guide him." The well devised and directed production was apparently received warmly as a commendable drama and a pioneering venture.

While in St. Louis, Stevens not only directed scheduled plays but offered a special nativity show, "The Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors," and presented a series of lectures, spanning the theatre from the classic to the modern period, to the Cryptic Club of St. Louis. The Christmas play stage design was based on a pageant wagon permanent setting plan. As worked out, the set consisted of a small arched cell, steps leading over and around a throne situated atop, and local lighting, all of which gave "excellent continuity with

17 St. Louis Post Dispatch, May 7, 1933.

He even worked with The Players in New York City, the Casino Players, and produced "The Anatomist" at New York's Bijou Theatre.

One offer proved discouraging to Stevens. In April, 1931, his name was suggested as a candidate for the new office of Dean of a College of Fine Arts at the University of Illinois, Urbana. J. M. Kennedy's letter to Stevens, April 17, 1931, outlined the position. Numerous letters passed between Kennedy, instructor in the Department of Architecture, and Stevens, each seemingly more enthusiastic than the other about the prospects.

A newly formed advisory board, however, needed a record of Stevens' training and degrees. The information was imperative as the board could find no mention of Stevens in Who's Who. Unable to supply a list of degrees, Stevens, who had no degrees, wrote to Armour Institute President Raymond explaining the situation. Stevens wrote that he had never graduated from Armour because of the deaths of his parents. Offered many honorary degrees, which he refused because he did not respect them, Stevens now inquired if such an honorary degree might be bestowed him by Armour in order that his credentials might satisfy the demands of the advisory board.  

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21 Letter to President Raymond, Armour Institute, from Thomas Wood Stevens, May 11, 1931.
As for degrees I have none. I had none when Carnegie inaugurated the first course leading to a degree in the dramatic field. If such a course as many Universities now offer had been available, I should probably have given up some of the practical training I have had to get. I say this because I recognize the desirability of this evidence; but . . . in 1901 . . . the colleges . . . offered none of the essential technical training. 22

Stevens did not get the post at the University of Illinois.

Victor Rubin, Department of Promotion, Century of Progress International Exposition, Chicago, Illinois, wrote Stevens November 27, 1931, extending him an invitation to prepare a survey of the possibilities leading to a grand pageant that would climax the festivities of the exposition. Stevens accepted the offer and by March, 1932, had been placed in complete charge of all pageantry. 23 Between March 1932 and the spring of 1933 Stevens completed the necessary plans for pageants to open the Century of Progress in 1934.

In addition to his work of general supervision of all pageantry at the Exposition, Stevens, with the assistance of B. Iden Payne,

22 Letter to J. M. Kennedy from Thomas Wood Stevens, May 1, 1931.

organized, wrote, directed, and produced modified versions of Shakespeare's comedies which were presented at the Merrie Old England display at the fair. Public response to the shortened editions of Shakespeare, presentations that could be enjoyed in a single sitting of thirty to forty-five minutes, was enthusiastic. People flocked to Merrie Old England where, according to writer Donna Rose Feldman, in a brief span Shakespeare could be digested and understood. The Globe productions expanded both the literary and dramatic horizons of thousands of American who visited the Exposition. 24

The Globe Theatre Company continued long after the Century of Progress closed. From 1934 until 1939 Stevens enjoyed the successes and worried with the problems of the group as it toured the United States from California to New York. Meanwhile, an offer to teach at the University of Miami was received as was a proposal to serve as a regional director of the Federal Theatre project.

Data related to the Globe Theatre Company may be found in Volumes 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 of the Stevens Collection. Correspondence pertaining to this venture is scattered throughout Volumes 14, 15, and 16. Volume 64 contains the shortened versions of the Shakespearean plays presented at Merrie Old England; these plays are handled by Samuel French, Inc. A previously mentioned dissertation, "An Historical Study of Thomas Wood Stevens' Globe Theatre Company, 1934-1937," Donna Rose Feldman, University of Iowa, 1953, offers detailed descriptions of the activities of the Globe at the Expositions in Chicago, San Diego, Dallas, and Cleveland.
The first he rejected; the second he accepted in 1935 and 1936.  

Another theatrical association for Stevens was his brief connection with the Bonstelle Civic Theatre in Detroit, Michigan, from December, 1933, to January, 1934. A group of dedicated women had undertaken the task of reviving the well-known theatre company founded by the late Jessie Bonstelle. Planned as a venture totally separate from commercial theatre in direction and location, the Bonstelle organization, under Stevens' leadership, was to occupy the auditorium of the Detroit Institute of Arts. Support pledged by prominent Detroit citizens and a large advance subscription sale, complemented by voluminous publicity, seemed to assure success for the project.

But in spite of the backing, the praiseworthy reviews, and the talented personnel of the company, which included, along with Stevens, Carl Benton Reid, B. Iden Payne, Whitford Kane, Dorothy Raymond, and Les Marzolf of the old Goodman, the Bonstelle repertory effort collapsed. After three productions, the gala opening Christmas eve, 1933, with "Tour du Monde," the December 31, 1933, performance of "The Late Christopher Bean," and the final show, "The Pigeon," the ambitious project toppled. The experiment

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26 Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.
in a repertory system failed, commented reporter Ralph Holmes in the *Detroit Evening Times*, December 24, 1933, because the "... system is all against the American tradition."

Again in the January 15, 1934 *Detroit Evening Times* Holmes complained that Stevens' work was an artistic luxury that many, but not enough, wish the city could afford. Theatre critic, John Pritchard, agreed. He wrote:

> It isn't enmity that keeps audiences from stage shows; it's lethargy. I register herewith a devout prayer that Thespis may smile benignantly on Mr. Stevens in his efforts to revive an admirable and necessary institution. The legitimate theatre can't compete with the movies; the net result is no box office and fadeout for a heroic effort.²⁷

The lack of money eroded Stevens' plans for establishing a repertory art theatre. But neither the demise of the Bonstelle Theatre Company nor the end of the Goodman discouraged Stevens for in 1940 he assisted a similar venture in Philadelphia. And for the next six years his connection with the American theatre scene ran in different channels.

In 1934 Stevens accepted Rupel Jones' invitation to participate in the National Theatre Conference at Oklahoma University, April 12. During this same year he outlined drama programs for

the University of Miami at Coral Gables and the University of Iowa. During 1935, in addition to his usual voluminous output of literary works, he presented a radio sequence "Courage," lectured at the National Bar Association, directed a pageant in Yorktown, New York, refused a directing position in Pasadena, and began a year's term as Mid-West Regional Director of the Federal Theatre.²⁸

*Calendar* entries for 1934-1936 specifically mention various problems that beset the touring Globe Company. Travel mix-ups, show postponements, impossible rehearsal schedules, temper tantrums by some members, and general dissatisfaction worried Stevens who still held the controlling interest. Stevens called this period as a free-lance producer a dog's life,²⁹ one that prevailed until 1939 when the Globe Company was sold.

Early in 1937 Stevens began his final association with educational theatre. For the next five years, until his death in 1942, he taught at the University of Iowa, Stanford University, and the University of Arizona. Each assignment was seemingly challenging and rewarding for Stevens.


E. C. Mabie, Chairman of the Speech Department at the University of Iowa, had been a close friend of Stevens since 1927. At that time, according to the correspondence, Mabie had asked for Stevens' advice about a building project, which included a theatre. Stevens responded eagerly, and since then had answered requests for recommendations for the Iowa faculty, assisted in designing graduate theatre projects for Mabie, and counseled his colleague on course offerings. It was Mabie who had been one of the first to offer encouragement and possible employment to Stevens, after his Goodman resignation, in a warm letter, June 4, 1930.

Mabie wired Stevens, January 22, 1937, asking him to act as guest director at the University of Iowa for the summer session. Stevens' acceptance was a "delight" to the chairman who outlined a tentative schedule of courses, listed the technical staff, and offered Stevens a free hand to direct one play of "stature" or whatever he preferred.

Stevens preferred to produce two plays which he had done before, "Hippolytus" and "The Chalk Circle." His courses were

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Historical Survey of the Theatre, Technique of Acting, and Acting, Rehearsal and Performance, areas well-known to him. Both the productions and the courses were echoes of his earlier triumphs. Pictures and programs of the two productions display sets and character descriptions similar to those previously mounted. No reviews of the plays nor comments about the reception of his academic classes appeared. But contact with Mabie, and Iowa, continued in spite of Stevens' moving to Stanford University in the fall.

Stevens was familiar with the surroundings at Stanford for he, along with colleagues Giles W. Gray, Glenn Hughes, and Hubert Heffner, had attended a conference on the interrelation of speech arts at the institution in August. L. E. Bassett, Division of Public Speaking, wanted Stevens for the autumn quarter. President Wilbur, seemingly impressed with Stevens, found money and hired him as Acting Director of Drama, a position he held until the summer of 1939.

During the first quarter Stevens directed "Don Juan" and "The Trojan Women." A staff reviewer for the university paper

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33 *Bulletin of Conference in Speech and Drama, Stanford University, August, 1937, Vol. 16, Stevens Collection.*

34 *Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from President Wilbur, September 30, 1937.*

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commented that numbers of out-of-town critics, directors, and playwrights were attracted to the plays and Stevens' plan "... to educate players and playgoers by presenting examples of the world's literature in an intimate setting, repeating each show several times and offering an almost continuous schedule." His additional concept of educational theatre was to provide a series of "unpretentious productions in the (new) little theatre," the advantage being to provide student actors experience in a variety of roles. These ideas closely resemble the concepts on which the Goodman was founded and which Stevens attempted to promote while at the Chicago theatre.


the varied bill presented, the grandeur of directing noticed, and the sensitive interpretation of the plays felt. Writers apparently appreciated the inviting change from the run-of-the-mill professional productions and even suggested a plan of exchanging plays with another university. Such a program, it was argued, would fill gaps while the home talent was rehearsing and would provide the best grade of "economic theory."  


Stanford play reviewers appeared more favorably inclined toward Stevens' dramatic offerings than had some reporters in Chicago. One writer felt "Camille" was stated as a "... revered

classic but amusing good theatre."³⁸ "All's Well That Ends Well" was praised as a "classical project both for dramatic exercise and entertainment . . . ."³⁹ and "A Night's Lodging" as a masterpiece of brutal tragedy and gusty humor . . . to which the audience even threw off its customary restraint and shouted 'Bravo' in the curtain calls."⁴⁰

Steven's apparent success was not limited to play productions. According to interviewer Ada Hanifin, writing in the San Francisco Examiner, October 31, 1938, Stevens, scholar, authority on Shakespeare, professional stage director and producer, possibly has more students on the American stage than any contemporary instructor. Hanifin stated that twenty-five outstanding troupers of the legitimate stage, interviewed personally during the last four years, received their early stage training from Stevens; she felt, consequently, that Stanford would be wise to give additional courses in speech and drama, under Stevens, for students of drama not attending the university.

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What authority, if any, Stevens, as Acting Director of Drama, had in promoting drama courses is not defined. The course offerings in theatre were numerous, however. A "Speech and Drama Time Schedule" in the Stevens Collection lists nineteen different drama courses out of twenty-eight speech offerings. The courses were: Vocal Expression, The One-Act Play, Writing the One-Act Play, Vocal Interpretation of Shakespeare, Voice Training, Techniques of Acting, Advanced Acting, Principles of Directing, Advanced Directing, Stagecraft, Stage Lighting, Stage Design, Rehearsal and Performance, Problems of Stage Design, Problems of Stage Costume, Projects in Directing, Make-Up, Problems of Stage Lighting, and Costume Design. There is no evidence that classes were opened to persons other than university students. Of interest, however, is a memo to Stevens from chairman Bassett, March 23, 1938, that remarked that no matter how good or bad the drama students were at Stanford they were the chief concern, and as Stanford was not a public dramatic school, the students should receive the best instruction and all the attention possible.

Stevens gave his full attention to those duly enrolled drama students. One Hickingbotham complained of a low grade received

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41 Stanford Memo: Course Committee, Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.
in Technique of Acting. Stevens explained that grades were given for work done, and as Hickingbotham had appeared disinterested, did as little work as possible, and didn't think, a low mark was recorded. Stevens concluded:

You ask for your defect: it is mainly that you do not seem to think, or participate. 42

If the requirements for Speech 160, Technique of Acting, were any indication of work to be completed, a student would find it difficult to pass without putting forth a great deal of energy. The course requirements included: assigned reading projects, a notebook containing criticisms of plays, lecture notes, and book reports, class work which required active participation in body movement exercises, walking, kneeling, facial expression, responding physically to emotions, embracing, turning, gesturing, analyzing, imagining and playing the part, line and movement, exercises of climax and contrast, pantomime, group movement, rhythm work, and playing individual scenes and monologues. 43

Apparently Steven's years at Stanford were full, challenging, and rewarding. In April 1938, Stevens was appointed

42 Letter to Mr. Hickingbotham from Thomas Wood Stevens, April 2, 1938.
Director of Drama, in the Division of Speech and Drama. In this position Stevens faced administrative problems. A major cut in the budget, a condition present at other institutions as well, necessitated juggling course offerings and faculty members. Similar juggling was occurring, according to a Stevens letter to Stanford President Wilbur, March 26, 1938, at Northwestern University. As a result Hubert Heffner was open to an offer from Stanford. The offer was made, and Heffner joined the Stanford faculty that summer.

During the remainder of 1938, while Stevens was at Stanford, he traveled to the tenth anniversary celebration of the University of Michigan Repertory Players, joined the Poets Round-Up in Santa Fe, and published his well-known long poem "Westward Under Vega." Related theatre endeavors filled the year 1939. The Globe Theatre Company was sold, for $3,500, after its performance at the New York World's Fair; "Westward Under Vega" had a radio performance; Samuel French requested publishing rights for the Globe Theatre versions of Shakespeare; Stevens researched and publicized the forthcoming Coronado Pageant; and, he attended a performance of his own play, "Venus and Adolphus," written in

44Calendar entries, 1938.
1938 satirizing Hitler, presented by Fred McConnell at the Cleveland Playhouse. 45

In a letter to Ina Claire Stevens indicated that his previous views that the theatre should not be a social tool might be changing. Perhaps, he commented, the social drama has some merit.

This 'Venus and Adolphus' is a satiric comedy, and we found in Cleveland that the audience is ready enough to laugh at Hitler. In fact, if they had started to laugh at him seven years ago, the world might be different; anyway, he's afraid of being laughed at, and that suits me. 46

When L. E. Bassett retired as chairman of the Division of Speech and Drama, the position was offered to Stevens. He refused the post, and William (Bill) Bassett served as acting chairman until Hubert Heffner accepted the job. Stevens broke with Stanford in 1939, possibly because, as the Calendar, 1939, states, "Heffner can't afford luxuries. I'm a luxury." His actions apparently pleased Mabie, at Iowa, who made an immediate proposal to Stevens to return. Because of commitments to the Coronado Pageant, theatre publications, and theatre conferences, Stevens was unable to accept Mabie's proposition until the summer of 1940.

45 Letter to Ina Claire from Thomas Wood Stevens, December 1, 1939.

46 Ibid.
Almost a year before his return to the Iowa faculty, Stevens received a letter from Mable, August 14, 1939, in which he inquired about the feasibility of offering a course in practical community theatre administration. For twenty years, according to Mable, the university had given freedom and support to the program of theatre training, a program that particularly prepared graduates to teach in colleges and universities. Now, a broad minded and liberal dean wanted to implement a program to emphasize specific training for leaders of community theatre. Attempting to organize a practical, and somewhat unconventional, program Mable asked Stevens:

First, to what courses should a young community theatre director give special attention? Should he spend some time with courses in community and government organization, business administration, playground and recreation work, journalism, accounting or any other subjects? Second, in the last two years how many young men, for whom you have served as personal adviser . . . , have been placed in directorships of community theatre which pay them a living wage? 47

Stevens replied that the large field was crowded with incompetents, and the problem of training was to give "leadership, confidence and tact," the last the hardest for there was no way to teach it. 48

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47 Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from E. C. Mable, August 14, 1939.

48 Letter to E. C. Mable from Thomas Wood Stevens, November 6, 1939.
1939, one short course in business may be valuable, but it is incidental to a solid background in the organization and direction of a theatre. At Stanford he experimented with a seminar course, Projects in Directing. Stevens summarized, "It was strategy, not tactics. Anyway it worked." Students were hired by the Palo Alto Community Theatre, Sacramento Little Theatre, and the Hebrew Players of San Francisco.

Mabie accepted Stevens' outline of the course along with another innovative idea which Stevens called "... the finest idea in the field of dramatic education I ever had." Based on Stevens' suggestions Mabie offered two practical theatre offerings in the summer of 1940. One was a course, Experimental Theatre Seminar, Speech 212S, and the other was a sort of "interneship" for advanced students.

The internship program used thirty-five students to work as a producing company. They served as actors, technicians or on the business staff, wherever needed, and produced plays continuously during the summer. Students received eight hours credit for their

49 Letter to E. C. Mabie from Thomas Wood Stevens, November 20, 1939.

50 Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from E. C. Mabie, December 23, 1939.
work, and rather than having to attend classes, the group would have conferences and discussion on community theatre administration and operation when necessary. In that way, Mabie thought, the conflict between library study and performance could be avoided.

Productions in Iowa City would be supplemented by additional performances at the university's biological laboratories on Lake Okoboji. Mabie felt,

The whole thing seems to be a perfectly solid venture of an educational theatre. It is not a summer theatre . . . . It is not exactly a stock company. It is . . . the internship system which is used in the University Hospital except that this internship is made a part of the regular work for the degree.

The theatre bill featured "Coriolanus" with special lighting illuminating an elaborate stage with an inner stage and working balcony, the perennial "Don Juan," and "Tobias and the Angel." "Tobias" seemingly resembled Stevens' earlier production, but this performance made greater use of levels, localized lighting, and music, written by Julien Benjamin.

The lack of funds prevented Stevens from remaining on the permanent staff at Iowa. So, late in 1940 and early in 1941 he

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51 Ibid.

52 Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from E. C. Mabie, January 2, 1940.

53 Correspondence, Vol. 7, Stevens Collection.
returned to his work as a free-lance play director. He arranged pageants in Wisconsin, New Mexico, New York and both Dakotas. He painted and wrote poetry, plays, and a scenario with his son, Alden. Early into 1941 Stevens was briefly associated with the Main Line Theatre in Philadelphia. Backed partially by the Philco Corporation and an impressive list of patrons, the Main Line Theatre hoped to operate a School of Theatre project. Scheduled to open in a newly constructed building about January 2, 1941, the Main Line Theatre venture never got off the ground. Like the Bonstelle, the Main Line Theatre project folded in March, 1941.  

Stevens continued to write and publish during the spring and returned to the University of Iowa for the summer. The university play bill, directed by Stevens and former Carnegie student and current director of the Cleveland Playhouse Fred McConnell, offered "Flight to the West," "The Little Clay Cart," "The Trojan Women," and "Winter's Tale." As before, the university plays, termed "very popular," were staged both in Iowa City and at Lake Okoboji.

\[54\] Correspondence, Vol. 17, Stevens Collection.  
\[55\] Ibid.  
\[56\] University of Iowa Publication, Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.
The supervising technician at Lake Okoboji was Peter Marroney. A member of the University of Arizona staff in the academic session, Marroney had first met Stevens at a National Theatre Conference in Oklahoma in 1934. During the summer of 1940 Marroney had worked with Stevens' production staff at the University of Iowa and in April of the same year had participated along with Stevens in the establishing meeting of the Southwest Regional Conference of the National Theatre Conference in Tucson, Arizona.57

Marroney was so impressed with Stevens' work that he told Stevens of a vacancy in the theatre department at the University of Arizona and notified Dean Arthur Andersen, College of Fine Arts, of Stevens' availability.58 Andersen immediately wrote Stevens and offered him the position of Head, Drama Department. Eager to have Stevens join his faculty, Andersen disclosed that although the salary would be small there would be much freedom in his schedule.59

Stevens loved the Southwest; his permanent address was Canyon Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Stevens accepted the post

57Interview of Peter Marroney, March 30, 1972, Tucson, Arizona.

58Ibid.

59Letter to Thomas Wood Stevens from Arthur Andersen, June 28, 1941.
the lighting of the entire structure being enclosed in a dark cyclo-
rama, furnishing the simplest means of isolating the various planes
of action."19

Stevens' pictorial stage arrangements and his skill in
emphasizing universal themes drew high praise. St. Louisians
repeatedly noted:

His [Stevens] theatre is the playground of the imagi-
nation of Mankind. It knows notunities of time, nor
place, nor action. Only the unity of Human Inspiration.
Certainly more than any American, possible more than
any contemporary, he deserves the epithet which Gordon
Craig reserves for the very few: he is a Man of the
Theatre.20

Stevens left the Little Theatre of St. Louis in May, 1933, to
return to Chicago where he was working on the Chicago Century of Pro-
gress Exposition. His acceptance of director of all pageantry of the
Chicago Fair was one of many offers of work. Correspondence in the
Stevens Collection indicate that during 1931 and 1932, Stevens was
inundated with offers of theatrical assignments. He received propos-
als to head the Denver Repertory Company, to teach and direct at
Tufts College, and to plan educational drama programs in New York.

after thinking the matter over seriously and after being assured his
schedule at Arizona would permit him to write in the mornings, to
teach in the afternoons, and to rehearse at night. He wrote:

The salary is not a very big factor with us; we have
a little income, and can always augment it. But we
do like to live in the Southwest . . . and the general
situation . . . offers great possibilities.  

After leaving the University of Iowa at the end of the 1941
summer session and before assuming his duties at the University
of Arizona, Stevens and his wife, Helen, took a leisurely motor trip,
a rare vacation that was totally unrelated to a theatre venture. They
visited friends in Iowa and Nebraska, and, according to Calendar
entries, 1941, enjoyed long moonlight drives and a blissful trip to
Estes Park, Colorado, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Sometime during
this summer traveling, Stevens had a severe attack of gall stones.

His illness, however, did not prevent Stevens from be-
ginning a busy schedule at Arizona in September. One of the first
announcements to come from the office of the new Head, Drama De-
partment, was a schedule of the university's 1941-1942 play bill,
"Don Juan" was to open the season and be followed by "The Winter's

60 Letter to Arthur Andersen from Thomas Wood Stevens,
July 4, 1941.

61 Calendar entry, 1941.
Tale," "Flight to the West," "Tobias and the Angel," and "Murder in the Cathedral." As planned, Stevens wrote in the morning hours taught History of American Theatre, History of World Theatre, Acting, and Directing in the afternoons, and rehearsed in the evenings.

University President Atkinson, in less than two weeks time, saw in Stevens a true artist who saw theatre as an adjustment to life. This man lived what he believed, and students sought out his counsel. President Atkinson, recognizing Stevens' talents, booked him for a radio address designed to establish a similar rapport with the community.

As usual the correspondence for this period was heavy. Communications indicate continued requests for Stevens' assistance in organizing pageants, setting-up theatre groups, and recommending people to fill theatre positions. Among the letters was one which probably stirred memories for Stevens. A letter dated December 12, 1941, came from R. Rocher who requested Stevens to edit the enclosed biographical sketch to appear in the next edition of *Who's Who in the Western Hemisphere*. Another letter came from Mabie

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62 Announcement, University of Arizona, September 26, 1941, Vol. 17, Stevens Collection.

63 Interview with Peter Marroney, Tucson, Arizona.
who again invited Stevens to teach at the University of Iowa the summer of 1942. Stevens accepted the offer but did not live long enough to honor his contract.

After "Don Juan" opened in old Herring Hall, October 22-25, 1941, Stevens moved into rehearsals for "Flight From the West" to open December 11, 1941. On December 9, the productions was to be given a trial performance at Davis Monthau military base just outside Tucson. Two days before its presentation at Monthau, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. The bombing affected the play, Stevens thought, and the play was no longer a play. To the December ninth audience he said, as he stood before the curtain:

You are here tonight for what will be an important night. Two days ago it was a current play, and now it is a commentary.

Stevens began rehearsals for the third show, "Tobias and the Angel," but did not realize the production. One night, after a late rehearsal, January 28, 1942, Stevens and Marroney chatted over hot chocolate and cinammon toast at the Stevens' home on Linden. Marroney left about one-thirty a.m. Before five a.m. Mrs. Stevens notified him that "T.W." had died of an occlusion of the heart.

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64 Program, "Don Juan," Vol. 44, Stevens Collection.
65 Interview with Peter Marroney, Tucson, Arizona.
66 Ibid.
Three days after his sixty-second birthday, January 29, 1942, Thomas Wood Stevens, idealistic leader of the American theatre, died. Since 1908 when he dedicated himself to a theatrical vocation Stevens had given his energies to that work. At the Chicago Art Institute, at the University of Wisconsin, and at Carnegie Institute of Technology Stevens had formulated tenets of the theatre. For a brief five year period at the Goodman Memorial Theatre in Chicago he had seen those tenets crystallize into a reality. He offered American audiences a choice of drama, stage productions not to be seen on the commercial stage, from the old to the new, the classical to the modern, the tested to the experimental, and the native to the foreign. He attempted to educate theatre audiences to lesser known works through the efforts of trained personnel whose life was the theatre. Since Goodman he had originated the Globe Theatre Company and taught, with apparent success, at four major universities. He spoke, he wrote, he painted, and he performed tasks that would promote the theatre as a true art.

Headlines in newspapers, scattered throughout the United States, announced his passing and attested to his influence on the American theatre movement. Reporters not only remembered his days at Goodman and Carnegie but recalled his continued dedication to his ideals since. The New York Times, January 30, 1942,
particularly praised his work with Shakespeare in the Globe Theatre Company. The Chicago Tribune called Stevens "a figure in the world of arts and letters . . . ."\(^6\) The Denver Evening Telegraph, January 30, 1942, dubbed him an "international theatre figure," the St. Louis Globe Democrat, February 6, 1942, remembered him as "an impetus for good theatre," and the St. Louis Post Dispatch wrote a memorial entitled "T. W." which noted:

'T.W.' as Thomas Wood Stevens was affectionately known to those who worked with him . . . was a rare gentleman, a gentle soul on a foundation of granite.

He was an artist in every atom of his being. Careless of self, in the cause of his art . . . he was adamant and immovable. Perhaps his favorite word was 'right.' A thing was right, or it was not right -- he knew no other criterion. The cheap, the showy, the ephemeral were not for him. If others disagreed, he said nothing, but went his own way without recrimination.

Now he has slipped quietly out of life. The American theater has lost a worthy leader.\(^6\)

\(^6\)Chicago Tribune, January 30, 1942.

CONCLUSION

In the early years of the twentieth century American theatre was atrophying. Generally speaking, most stage productions were unimaginative, uninspiring, and unamusing. Rising costs and business controls contributed to dull, mediocre drama. Even the touring system, the link with New York theatre, "more or less went to pieces." And those commercial companies which survived continued, more often than not, to present unimportant and trivial works.

About the same time groups of amateurs and groups of dedicated artists assembled in areas far removed from Broadway. Some organizations developed because of social needs while others emerged for aesthetic reasons. But whatever the causes little theatres, community theatres, educational theatres, and art theatres sprang up across the country. The result of these efforts was a new kind of theatre in America.

Chicago was an important center in this ferment. In that city Victor Mapes directed the New Theatre, 1906-1907; Donald

Robertson appeared for the Chicago Theater Society and the Drama Players between 1907-1912; and, Maurice Browne struggled for one year, 1910-1911, to promote The Chicago Little Theatre.

Thomas Wood Stevens came to Chicago during this period of upheaval and became a part of those forces that worked to reform and stabilize the "stilted, unimaginative American theatre of the time, a theatre that was neither a projection of American life nor of the creative spirit,"² but rather a "wilderness of mediocrity."³

Stevens had planned on an engineering career, but his education plans were cut short because of the deaths of his parents. Out of necessity, he worked for a railroad, writing, painting, etching, and engraving. His success in these areas encouraged him to publish an art magazine, directed him to associations with fine artists, and eventually motivated him into a career in the theatre.

His first direct association with the theatre came while he was teaching an art history course at the Chicago Art Institute.

He worked with Donald Robertson's company and found that his interests were bound to the theatre. And before Stevens went to teach at the University of Wisconsin he had dedicated his life to the theatre.

While at Madison, Wisconsin, Stevens was active in the Wisconsin Drama Society. Also, his simultaneous teaching position at the Chicago Art Institute garnered him the job of writing a pageant, "The Italian Renaissance," which was highly successful. Prior to the pageant Stevens had concentrated on learning every aspect of the theatre. He read every book related to the theatre he could find -- history, costuming, makeup, acting, directing, writing, and set designing. Furthermore, he followed closely the related arts of music, painting, architecture, and dancing. He wrote and published plays and poetry, attended numerous theatrical productions, and joined theatre groups.

In 1913 Stevens accepted an invitation from the Carnegie Institute of Technology to establish a department of drama at that institution. He formulated the policies and curriculum for a four year educational theatre program, the first department of drama in an American university. The course of study which he designed reflected his beliefs that the theatre was a serious endeavor. His program of study demanded dedication from his students and
offered them in return a total training in the field. Theatre majors at Carnegie received stringent training in theory and practicum and upon graduation were to be capable artists who could offer their knowledge and experience to the theatre. For Stevens believed that the theatre was not a toy of the dilettante but a tool of the artists.

Stevens remained at Carnegie until 1924 when he returned to Chicago to head the newly formed Kenneth Sawyer Goodman Memorial Theatre under the auspices of the Chicago Art Institute. Because of its connection with the Art Institute, the Goodman Theatre venture included a school for training theatre artists in conjunction with its art theatre operations. Such an approach, Stevens felt, would afford a constant supply of artists able to promote form and stability in American theatre.

Form and stability, as Stevens saw it, meant a return to the theatre as an art. To him the theatre was a link between the past and the present, a vehicle that should present universal views of humanity, offer the world's literature, span national boundaries, surmount language barriers, and provide a multiplicity of experiences.

These goals could be achieved, he thought, through the discipline of art. Theatre, an adjustment to life, was not the province of the untrained, arty element. The theatre, as he saw it,
belonged to the artist, the artist who knew his discipline thoroughly. And theatre was the result of an interdependence of arts, an incorporation of all media, which assists a break through to the perceptions of the audience and permits vast exposure to life.

He wrote:

Consider the person who considers his art the art of the theatre – the actor, the stage director, the scene designer, the light man. They are all part of the theatre: But which of them practices the art of the theatre: None: the theatre practices it.\(^4\)

Furthermore, Stevens believed that the art theatre should experiment, create, attempt the untried, certainly do more than play the latest grist from Broadway. At Goodman Stevens was not interested in fostering any special style or type of acting or drama. The theatre should not limit itself but should pioneer and experiment with dramatic works, acting, directing, lighting, and sound. The drama of the world should be its field from the classics to the originals. Innovations which began with the script and ended with the production should be welcomed. Stevens' dream was to participate in the creation of a theatre where young men and women playwrights, actors, designers, and directors might learn and work with enthusiasm and integrity. Such a theatre would re-create a living art up and down the cities and towns of our country; it

\(^4\)Thomas Wood Stevens, "Truisms," Vol. 54, Stevens Collection.
would infuse new life into the commercial theatre and return to it its true function: to make us see visions and dream dreams.⁵

Stevens saw the theatre, an institution familiar to all societies, as existing to meet some human need. Drama voiced idealism and awareness. The theatre should offer those visions and assist man in achieving a closer understanding of man. He noted,

Just what does the theatre offer? A sense of immediate life, with apprehensible motives; characters, types; story; the feeling of oneself into and part of the emotional pressure; release from life into imagination or fantasy; an Art Theatre parallels a permanent collection, a school, and a passing exhibition.⁶

Stevens, the dreamer, felt the American audiences should at least be offered the best of theatre. And he attempted to foster, among the young and the old, alert and creative audiences.

For five years at the Goodman Stevens endeavored tangibly to effect his beliefs. He presented plays not offered on the commercial stage. He produced the work of such playwrights as Ibsen, Shaw, Kaiser, Molière, Sheridan, Pirandello, Prince Shudaka, and Galsworthy. He mounted constructivist drama,

⁵Program, "The Sea Gull," Vol. 54, Stevens Collection.

⁶Ibid.
Chinese drama, and Jewish legend drama. He translated long lost plays. He introduced playwright Romain Rolland to America. He employed guest directors who offered different styles of directing and approaches to acting. Among those who came to direct at the Goodman were B. Iden Payne, Whitford Kane, Mrs. Elliott Jenkins, Marion Gering, and David Itkin. He experimented with false prosceniums, sound equipment, lighting effects, mobile stage wagons, and scene designs. He promoted a regular children's theatre. He maintained a repertory company and simultaneously trained drama students in the theatre wing of the Chicago Art Institute.

The Goodman, under Stevens, was professional in its attitudes. Drama was considered a serious literary form, and the standards for play selection were artistic rather than commercial. The theatre structure itself was the epitome of beauty and practicality. It was designed in classic taste but afforded remarkable facilities for experimentation with its latest technical equipment. The trained repertory personnel offered assistance to the students. A modified repertoire system was followed; and, the creation of a knowledgeable audience, by mere exposure if nothing else, was attempted.

Between 1925 and 1930 Stevens guided the Goodman Theatre with some success. However, in the spring of 1930 Stevens
resigned his position because of incompatible and unsolvable
differences between him and the Theatre Committee of the
Chicago Art Institute.

Stevens' resignation from the Goodman did not halt his
active participation on the American theatre scene. For the next
twelve years, until his death in 1942, he wrote and directed page-
ants, assisted directly or indirectly the formation of numerous
theatre organizations, headed the Globe Theatre enterprise, served
as regional director of the Federal Theatre, contributed to several
journals, spoke to many conferences, published his book The
Theatre From Athens to Broadway, produced the first complete
version of Shakespeare's "All's Well That Ends Well" in America,
edited Shakespeare's comedies into shortened versions which were
published by Samuel French, and taught at four major universities.

At the University of Michigan, University of Iowa, Stan-
ford University, and the University of Arizona Stevens continued
to adhere to his standards of artistry. He directed plays which he
considered worthy, ones he had presented at the Goodman or ones
never mounted on a commercial stage. He attempted students'
works and encouraged new American scripts. In the classroom
Stevens emphasized theatre as an art worthy of study and not just
an amusement which appealed to popular taste.
His work and his attitudes toward his discipline achieved recognition and appreciation from his colleagues and increased the academic respectability of theatre courses. He concentrated on solid theatre training in his courses of theatre history, costuming, acting, directing, producing, designing, and performance. A comparison of course offerings at the four universities indicates that each institution presented a curriculum almost identical to the one Stevens formulated at Carnegie Tech in 1913.

Of Stevens' broad influences on people and other institutions it may be noted that he affected directly or indirectly theatre organizations, directors, actors, writers, teachers, and educational institutions.

Stevens was directly associated with the Wisconsin Drama Society, Drama League, Denver Repertory Company, Main Line Theatre of Philadelphia, Bonstelle Theatre of Detroit, St. Louis Little Theatre, Garden Theatre of St. Louis, Friends of the Players, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Carolina Players, Cleveland Playhouse, The Players of New York, The Casino Players, Pittsburgh Playhouse, the Goodman Theatre, and the Globe Theatre. Indirectly Stevens assisted the Kansas City Art Theatre, the Lobero Theatre, and community theatres in Boston, San Diego, Berkeley, and Dallas.
After leaving the Goodman Theatre Stevens continued his association with the National Fine Art Conference, Southwest Theatre Conference, American Educational Theatre Association, and the National Theatre Conference and increased his influence on educational theatre. His insistence that a thorough educational theatre program should be offered at Carnegie resulted in the formation of a curriculum that was followed by other universities. E. C. Mabie at the University of Iowa adapted Stevens' curriculum to the theatre department of his institution. Furthermore, Stevens designed a new course in practical community theatre, course numbered Speech 212S, Experimental Theatre Seminar, which Mabie also incorporated in the university's theatre offerings. And it was Stevens who suggested an internship program which the University of Iowa offered to students who worked to produce shows constantly during a summer session and for which they received eight hours credit. Finally, Mabie used Stevens' design for a graduate theatre project which was student direction of a show from its selection to its production supported by a notebook of descriptive data.

At the University of Michigan, according to colleague Valentine Windt, Stevens brought new standards of scenery in the form of colors, set designs, and pictorial arrangements. Stevens
required a rigid rehearsal schedule, one that was equitable to academic demands but nevertheless strenuous.

Stevens was associated with the following leaders in the theatre: B. Iden Payne, Whitford Kane, Thomas H. Dickinson, Donald Robertson, Paul Green, Kenneth MacGowan, Frederic McConnell, Glen Hughes, Hubert Heffner, E. C. Mabie, Hardin Craig, John Mason Brown, Walter Damrosch, Percy McKay, Barrett Clark, George P. Baker, Irving Pichel, Sam Hume, Gilmore Brown, Jimmy Church, Frederick Koch, Alexander Wyckoff, Alexander Dean, Leslie Marzolf, Theodore Viehman, E. H. Sothern, Otis Skinner, Melvin White, Carl Benton Reid, Kenneth S. Goodman, Hallie Flannagan, Martin Flavin, Lucy Barton, Ina Claire, Katherine Cornell, Rosamond Gilder, Mary Agnes Doyle, Irene Tedrow, and Eleanor Jewett.

During his long career Stevens was associated with the following educational institutions: Armour Institute, University of Wisconsin, the Chicago Art Institute, Carnegie Institute of Technology, University of Michigan, University of Iowa, Stanford University, University of Arizona, in a direct way, and with the University of Miami, Tufts College, University of Kentucky, and the University of California at Berkeley in an indirect way.
After leaving Goodman Stevens continued to write, direct, teach, paint, counsel, produce pageants, and participate in numerous theatrical ventures. MacGowan once called Stevens "one of the finest and most modest of our pioneers." Critics and colleagues characterized him professionally as scholarly, artistic, disciplined, dedicated, and enthusiastic. Writers of his time called him a scholar, painter, etcher, playwright, poet, teacher, director, printer, pageanteer, and pioneer. Personally his admirers termed him versatile, humane, gentle, likeable, unobtrusive, fearless, and genuine.

However individuals evaluated Stevens, as a group they considered Stevens a pioneer who loved the theatre. Particularly did he love the American theatre. Generally he was disgusted with the attitudes of foreign artists whom he called the "muss hafs," they must have this and they must have that. The one thing that Stevens felt he must have was an art theatre for the American people. Stevens' art theatre was one which was directed by and composed of artists trained in their fields and unafraid to attempt the untried but loathe to overlook the classics.

---

7 MacGowan, p. 52.

8 Personal interview with Peter Marroney, Tucson, Arizona.
As a result of this study the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Thomas Wood Stevens influenced and contributed to the American art theatre movement.

   In his work at the Goodman Theatre Stevens promoted renewed interest in the theatre as an art. He made known in America the works of the most advanced dramatists and gave impetus to playwrighting in his own land. He discouraged theatre as mere amusement of the unskilled and stressed theatre as the province of dedicated artists. He believed that an American audience could be cultivated and worked to achieve that goal. He promoted children's theatre. He experimented with scripts, directing, acting, and stage technique. He promoted the use of a repertory company. He directed one of three outstanding art theatres in the United States, the Goodman Memorial Theatre, the other two were the Cleveland Playhouse directed by Frederic McConnell, Stevens' student, and the Pasadena Playhouse directed by Gilmore Brown. He raised the standards of theatrical productions for he saw drama as a serious literary form and theatre as a disciplined art.

2. Thomas Wood Stevens influenced and contributed to educational theatre.

   He established the first department of drama in an American university. The curriculum and policies which he established were followed by at least four major universities at which he taught. He designed courses and projects which were incorporated into theatre offerings at the University of Iowa and Stanford University. He promoted his idea that theatre was an art at the universities.
3. Thomas Wood Stevens contributed to the
American theatre scene through his continued
activities with theatre organizations, his writing,
his directing, his counseling, and his teaching.

Thomas Wood Stevens was a springboard in American
theatre. His contributions to art and educational theatre are felt
today. Writer Dorothy Nichols summarized Stevens' major con-
tribution to American theatre.

Stevens saw the theatre not as show business
. . . but as an art. Like all great men, he
raised a standard and left us with a set of
values. 9

9Dorothy Nichols, "A Proscenium of Images," San
Francisco Chronicle, February 8, 1942.
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Volume 2  Correspondence, 1899-1911.
Volume 3  Correspondence, 1912-1913.
Volume 4  Correspondence, 1914.
Volume 5  Correspondence, 1915.
Volume 6  Correspondence, 1916.
Volume 7  Correspondence, 1917.
Volume 8  Correspondence, 1918.
Volume 9  Correspondence, 1919.
Volume 10 Correspondence, 1920-1921.
Volume 11 Correspondence, 1922.
Volume 12 Correspondence, 1923-1924.
Volume 13 Correspondence, 1925-1930.
Volume 14 Correspondence, 1931-1932.
Volume 15 Correspondence, 1933-1936.
Volume 16 Correspondence, 1937-1938.
Volume 17 Correspondence, 1939-1942.
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Volume 23 Goodman Theatre, 1924-1930. Correspondence (1923-1930); Resignation; Prospectus; Publicity, Financial Matters; Staff, students.

Volume 24 Goodman Theatre, 1924-1930. Photographs; Programs; Miscellaneous Material.


Volume 34 Pageants. 1917-1918.
#1 The Drawing of the Sword, 1917.
#2 Joan of Arc, 1918.

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#2 St. Louis Little Theatre. 1931-1933.
#3 University of Michigan, summers 1931-1933.
#4 University of Michigan, summers 1931-1933.
#5 Bonstelle Theatre, Detroit, Michigan, 1933-1934.
#6 Stanford University, 1937-1939.
#7 University of Iowa, summers 1937, 1940-1941.
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Olaf Andersen: "The Corn Chant."
Haniel Long: "Missouri."
Olaf Andersen: "Chorus of Pioneers."

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#2 Fletcher, John: "The Elder Brother."
#3 Goldoni, Carlo: "The Servant of Two Masters."
#4 Ibsen, H.: "The Warriors at Helgeland."
#5 Kaiser, Georg: "Gas."
#6 Leivick, H.: "The Golem."
#7 Rives, Amelie: "Love-in-a-Mist."
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LETTERS

APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

This list includes the courses in the curriculum for each of the four years in the Department of Drama, Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1916-1917 General Catalogue:

**First Year**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Technical Work, Acting and Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>History of Architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pictorial Art (Drawing and Composition)</td>
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<td>Theme Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elementary Technique (Voice Diction, Gesture)</td>
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<td>Legendary Art</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sight Singing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Health (Hygiene, Gymnastics and Dancing)</td>
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<td>Dramatic Literature</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>French</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>Fencing</td>
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<td>Historic Styles of Furniture and Decoration</td>
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<td>Hours</td>
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<td>History of Costume</td>
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<td>Electricity and Lighting</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>Stage Management</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>Health (Hygiene, Gymnastics and Dancing)</td>
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<td>Business Routine of the Theatre</td>
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APPENDIX B

Statement of Estimates of Cost of Goodman Hall-
Addition to the Art Institute of Chicago:
Based on Revised Plans and Specifications, dated June,
1924:

ELEVATOR:

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<td>Altizer Elevator Mfg. Co.</td>
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<td>Kaestner &amp; Hecht Co.</td>
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<td>C. H. Mitchell Elevator Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Otis Elevator Co.</td>
<td>5,570.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitt Engineering Co.</td>
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<td>Reliance Elevator Co.</td>
<td>4,048.00</td>
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<td>Whalen Elevator Co.</td>
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<td>Prince Elevator Co.</td>
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ELECTRIC WIRING:

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<td>W. A. Beile &amp; Co.</td>
<td>17,214.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dearborn Electric Co.</td>
<td>19,300.00</td>
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<td>Pierce Electric Co.</td>
<td>17,400.00</td>
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<td>Fuchs Electric Co.</td>
<td>21,000.00</td>
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<td>Oscar M. George Co.</td>
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<td>Hatfield Electric Co.</td>
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PLUMBING AND SEWERAGE:

No bids received; estimated 10,000.00

TOTAL OF THE LOW BIDS RECEIVED:

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<td>Heating</td>
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<td>(Using alternate figure of</td>
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<td>L. H. Prentice Co.</td>
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<td>Altizer Elevator Co.</td>
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<td>17,214.00</td>
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Plumbing
Estimated
10,000.00

Total
307,779.00

Presented August 11, 1924

Goodman Hall – Addition to the Art Institute of Chicago:

Additional Items needed to complete the Building:

Wall South of Main Entrance:

C. Everett Clark Co. $3,193.00
E. P. Strandberg Co. 1,700.00 (Low Bid)
Jacob Rodatz 2,500.00
N. P. Severin Co. 1,757.00
William Adams Co. 2,460.00
Chas. B. Johnson & Son, (did not care to figure)
Frank Stowell Co.,
William Mavor Co. (did not care to figure)
Midland Engineering & Cons. Co. (did not care to figure)

Steel Curtain for Proscenium Arch:
Variety Mfg. Co. 4,000.00

Seats for Auditorium:
American Seating Co. 6,000.00

Lighting Fixtures:
Estimated 3,000.00

Stage Equipment: No estimate

Switch Board and Dimmers: for stage
W. A. Beile & Co. 19,800.00
Dearborn Electric Co. 14,600.00 (Low Bid)
Pierce Electric Co. 16,600.00
Fuchs Electric Co. 19,500.00
Oscar M. George Co.
Hatfield Electric Co.

Presented August 11, 1924
Schedule "B":

(The following schedule of estimates of cost is sent for comparison only):

Statement of Estimates of Cost of Goodman Hall—Addition to the Art Institute of Chicago:
Based on Original Plans and Specifications, dated April, 1924.

GENERAL WORK:

<table>
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<td>William Adams Co.</td>
<td>340,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George A. Fuller Co.</td>
<td>(too busy to figure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Everett Clark Co.</td>
<td>293,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Stowell Co.</td>
<td>318,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. P. Strandberg Co.</td>
<td>305,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HEATING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L. H. Prentice Co.</td>
<td>70,974.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehring &amp; Hanson</td>
<td>72,310.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips-Getschow Co.</td>
<td>76,370.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. H. Crane Estate</td>
<td>73,750.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORK TILE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. E. Davis Co.</td>
<td>1,975.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David E. Kennedy</td>
<td>2,393.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonded Floors Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ELEVATOR:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaestner &amp; Hecht Co.</td>
<td>4,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ELECTRIC WIRING: No bids taken

PLUMBING: No bids taken

TOTAL OF LOW BIDS RECEIVED:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Work</td>
<td>C. Everett Clark Co.</td>
<td>293,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating</td>
<td>L. H. Prentice Co.</td>
<td>70,974.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Tile</td>
<td>E. E. Davis Co.</td>
<td>1,975.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevator</td>
<td>Kaestner &amp; Hecht Co.</td>
<td>4,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOTAL OF LOW BIDS RECEIVED: (Continued)

Electric Wiring: No bids
Plumbing: No bids

Total, without wiring & plumbing 369,954.00

Presented August, 11, 1924
Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect

Statement of Estimated Cost of Goodman Hall:
Addition to the Art Institute of Chicago,
Including Wall South of the Main Entrance,
Grant Park, Chicago:

GENERAL WORK and WALL SOUTH OF MAIN ENTRANCE
including changes listed in addenda, August 29, 1924

Jacob Rodatz 230,000.00

HEATING (Using alternate figure)
L. H. Prentice Co. 40,502.00

ELEVATOR
Altizer Elevator Co. 3,150.00

ELECTRIC WIRING
W. A. Beile & Co. 17,214.00

PLUMBING, SEWERAGE & GAS FITTING
M. J. Corboy Co. 7,650.00

ELECTRIC LIGHT FIXTURES (estimated) 3,000.00

SEATS FOR AUDITORIUM
American Seating Co. 6,000.00

STAGE, SWITCHBOARD & DIMMERS
Hatfield Electric Co. 13,900.00

RETAINING WALLS and FOUNDATIONS
Paid in full Sept. 12, 1923 $14,619.00
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAKING OUT PILES</td>
<td>$286.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid in full, May 14, 1924</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDITIONAL PILES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid in full, May 15, 1924        4,500.00</td>
<td>19,405.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHITECT'S COMMISSION at 6%</td>
<td>20,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEWER and WATER PIPE EXTENSIONS TO BUILDING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no estimate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEATING MAINS Extension of Art Institute</td>
<td>4,425.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTRIC CURRENT Extension from Art Institute</td>
<td>1,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAS Extension from Michigan Ave. (No report from Gas Co.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLUMBING FIXTURES TO COMPLETE EAST TOILET ROOMS</td>
<td>855.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED BY MR. THOMAS WOOD STEVENS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to make building ready for use, including carpets, furniture, curtains,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drops for stage, equipment for portable lighting, sliding steel curtains for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proscenium arch, stage wagons, estimated by Mr. Stevens</td>
<td>18,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$386,301.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presented August 29, 1924
Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect
ANNOUNCEMENT TO MEMBERS

concerning

THE GOODMAN THEATER

Enclosed with this announcement is a ticket with eight exchange coupons. These are good for eight seats for performances by the Repertory Company of the Goodman Theater at half price. These coupons may be used singly or together. They may be used for eight different plays, or for more seats for any one play you may choose.

The coupons are exchangeable at the front door of the Art Institute, on payment of fifty cents per seat, at any time when the Institute is open to the public. After 7:00 p.m., on performance days, they may be exchanged at the box office of the Theater.

The Theater is at the extreme north end of the east wing — at the corner of Monroe Street and South Parkway, across the Monroe Street Viaduct.

The Repertory Company plays, during the season, beginning October 22nd, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, with a Friday afternoon matinee at 2:30 p.m. It is a professional company of experienced players. The plays are chosen from a list covering a wide range; some works of established authors; some revivals of old plays, and some new works produced for the first time.

The bill for the public opening will be "The Forest," by John Galsworthy — the first production of this play in America.

Other productions for the season will be chosen from the following list, together with three new American plays not ready for announcement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Romantic Young Lady</th>
<th>Sierra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don Juan</td>
<td>Molière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>Georg Kaiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tower of Nesle</td>
<td>Dumas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartbreak House</td>
<td>Shaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School of Princesses</td>
<td>Benavente</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: The use of the exchange coupons by the members of the Art Institute is not only a privilege extended to the membership, but will also prove a sustaining force in the operation of the theater.

When members' coupons are gone, they will still have the privilege of purchasing as many tickets as they choose at a discount of twenty-five cents – that is, at seventy-five cents per seat.

For the performances of the Studio (students of the Drama Department) the price of seats will be fifty cents, with a discount of twenty-five cents to members who present their membership tickets when buying seats. Studio productions will be announced in the monthly Bulletin.

Announcement, 1925-1926
APPENDIX C

STEVENS' PRODUCTION RECEIPTS AT GOODMAN

Index figures — average per performance disregarding length of run or special conditions.

SEASON 1925-1926

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Forest</td>
<td>$216.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic Young Lady</td>
<td>170.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heir at Large</td>
<td>158.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>277.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyman</td>
<td>140.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tragedy of Nan</td>
<td>160.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Juan</td>
<td>165.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsummer Night's Dream</td>
<td>272.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average for Season $188.00

SEASON 1926-1927

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why Not</td>
<td>$167.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game of Love and Death</td>
<td>132.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion</td>
<td>234.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juno and the Paycock</td>
<td>356.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penelope</td>
<td>231.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Night</td>
<td>285.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigeon</td>
<td>220.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As You Like It</td>
<td>272.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average for Season $229.00

SEASON 1927-1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower of Nesle</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>145.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She Stoops to Conquer</td>
<td>220.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mask and the Face</td>
<td>204.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wild Duck</td>
<td>267.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vikings</td>
<td>428.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEVENS' PRODUCTION RECEIPTS AT GOODMAN

Camille in Roaring Camp . . . . 266.00
Mixed Doubles . . . . . . . . . . 141.00

Average for Season $246.00

SEASON 1928-1929

The Little Clay Cart . . . . $262.00
Inspector General . . . . . . 285.00
Dear Brutus . . . . . . . . . . 302.00
Six Characters . . . . . . . . 333.00
Lizard Gap. . . . . . . . . . 169.00
When We Dead Awaken 285.00
The Critic 339.00
Shadow of a Gunman 161.00
The Golem 251.00

Average for Season $285.00

SEASON 1929-1930

Romeo and Juliet . . . . . . $272.00
The Makropoulos Secret . . . . 259.00
Tour du Monde . . . . . . . . 247.00
The Field God . . . . . . . . . 265.00
Holiday . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 358.00
Rivals . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 363.00
Kolpak Must Dance . . . . . . . 204.00
Ariadne . . . . . . . . . . . . 207.00
Escape . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 197.00

Average for Season $263.00

Major Classic – Shakespeare, Sheridan, Ibsen 309.00
Eighteen no royalty plays (classic and standard) 264.00
Twenty-two royalty plays 222.00
Novelties (new or new to America) 182.00
Not only were these figures used by Charles Collins for his remarks in several issues of The Chicago Tribune but they were used by Stevens in his article "What the Audience Wants" which appeared in Theatre Arts Monthly, Volume XV, January, 1931. Stevens noted that an art theatre needed to know approximately what favor, in a given season, a given play may expect.

Stevens found no play ever ran to full capacity. The audiences were strict theatre goers. The plays and the directors varied. There were lucky and unlucky positions in the seasons, the first and last bills. The length of runs varied. Company members changed some with each season. Breaking ground, giving new men a chance, the most creative side of the game, was very expensive. The highest ten, in the five year period based on box office receipts were:

- The Vikings
- The Rivals
- Holiday
- Juno and the Paycock
- The Critic
- Six Characters
- Dear Brutus
- Twelfth Night
- The Inspector General
- When We Dead Awaken

Stevens remarked:

What success means in a repertory or an art theatre is not wholly determined by box office. . . . No theatre can be important except one which deals in important plays. The success is in the standard of plays given -- in the plays and nothing else -- and in the service to the growing public which appreciates these plays.
VITA

Born in Mexico, Missouri, February 9, 1926, Anna Dean Teague attended elementary and secondary school in Columbia, Missouri. She graduated from David H. Hickman High School in 1943. In 1945 she received the A. A. degree, with honors, from Christian College, now Columbia College, Columbia, Missouri; in 1947, the B. A. degree from the University of Missouri; in 1950, the B. S. degree from the University of Missouri; and, the Master of Arts degree from the same university in 1963. She served as principal and teacher of Sheridan School, Jasper County, Missouri, taught speech, English, music, and history at Hickman High School, Columbia, Missouri, and is presently on the faculty of the Department of Speech at Louisiana State University where she has taught since 1964. She is now a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Louisiana State University in May, 1973.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Anna Dean Teague

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: THOMAS WOOD STEVENS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN ART THEATRE WITH EMPHASIS ON THE KENNETH SAWYER GOODMAN MEMORIAL THEATRE, 1922-1930

Approved:

[Signatures of Major Professor and Chairman, Dean of the Graduate School]

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures of Committee Members]

Date of Examination:

April 10, 1973