

25.0830 Letter to nu alumni relations -

- * There is a height of sentimentality in my alum group from the 1970s
- * We don't have the kind of money that the big donors that build stadiums, etc. have
- * I'm not sure if any of them, other than me, will give to a fundraising effort to remodel Shanley Hall
- * I don't know if the University is interested in prioritizing a remodel of Shanley. I don't know if it's really necessary. If not, then I'll abandon this idea.
- * Other Universities with a high reputation for student comedy, as apart from student theater, include Brown, which settled with the administration.
- * If NU were to settle, I'd be dismayed and would probably not feel like giving, speaking only for myself.
- * It remains to be seen if Brown's settlement, and their community reaction to that decision, will affect the student comedy scene.
- * I would worry that if NU were to settle, it might have a negative effect on the NU comedy scene, since satire and political comedy are easily chilled in such an overly adversarial political environment, where a University's economic survival seemingly depends on capitulation and the unforeseen consequences of such.
- * The recent legal woes of NU are getting a lot of press - Fitz, the class action ERISA suit, the early admissions suit, etc. These, too, can have a chilling effect on giving, especially on the more modest alums like me, but perhaps

on the well off as well?

* The long delay on breaking ground on the Theater and Interp Center (the entire 1970s!), and the promise of a theater building that was proffered to theater students in the mid 70s, had the effect of creating a shortage of performance spaces, and thus a renaissance period for the birth of independent arts alliance student theater - a unique set of circumstances - and the tradition of abundant independent student theater continued.

* The remodel of Wirtz caused a moratorium of use of that building for a period of time, which further fertilized independent student theater in alternative venues.

* The decade subsequent to the remodel of Wirtz doesn't SEEM to have caused a reduction in independent student theater.

* FROM ROBERT MENDEL - NU ALUM -
COMMUNICATIONS 1980 - NU ARTS ALLIANCE BOARD
MEMBER 1977-1980 - Chairman of "The Orgy Of The Arts
Account" - Responsible for production of Arts Alliance
Plays in the Norris Center, including being the Account
responsible for Producing the Annual "Mee-Ow Show" -
1977-1980:

The "Assasins" episode was dismaying to me. When I
produced Threepenny Opera in May of 1980
([https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?
set=a.10214777832695556&type=3](https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10214777832695556&type=3) - Listen to the
complete recording done at the pick Staiger concert hall
June 6 1980 on Soundcloud! [https://on.soundcloud.com/
KIOgfsRpRzU2IWgKcV](https://on.soundcloud.com/KIOgfsRpRzU2IWgKcV)), we used the Ralph Manheim
Translation, inspired by the New York's Public Theater
Production of the 70s - we were not allowed to by rights -
and I did a presentation in a German Expressionism class
in lieu of taking the final while Producing it, and a Daily
Northwestern Reporter was in the class, who decided to
write a story about our artistic boldness - he called Tams
Witmark (who we paid for the amateur rights to produce it,
and who supplied orchestrations and scripts - which we
left in the box!

We created our own orchestrations and scripts from the
Manheim translation instead of the 1954 Blitzstein
translation - a tepid, linguistically, but very singable and
popular translation, though not loyal to the Brecht intent for

the very political and edgy text).

The response from Tams Witmark was to send a "cease and desist" letter to the University. I was brought into the Norris Director's office for a meeting where he presented me with the letter and said the University wanted us to cancel the show.

I was nerve-wracked by this, but defied him and announced that I would persist in mounting the show off-campus and would contact the press to advance a story about the University's attempt to suppress artistic expression. It apparently worked, as they let us do our 4 performances. But he said the University could hold my degree if I didn't comply, and I said, "Go ahead." I have no choice. Too much rehearsal and dedication to the show had taken place, and I was hell-bent to produce it. Bruce (I forgot his last name - Director of Norris) liked me and went back to Jim Carlton (administrator who received the letter from Tams Witmark), and got the clearance I needed to proceed to use the Louis Room.

The very IDEA OF CANCELLING PERFORMANCES LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO "ASSASINS" IS ABHORRENT TO ME.

At any rate, I remain bullish on NU Student theater.