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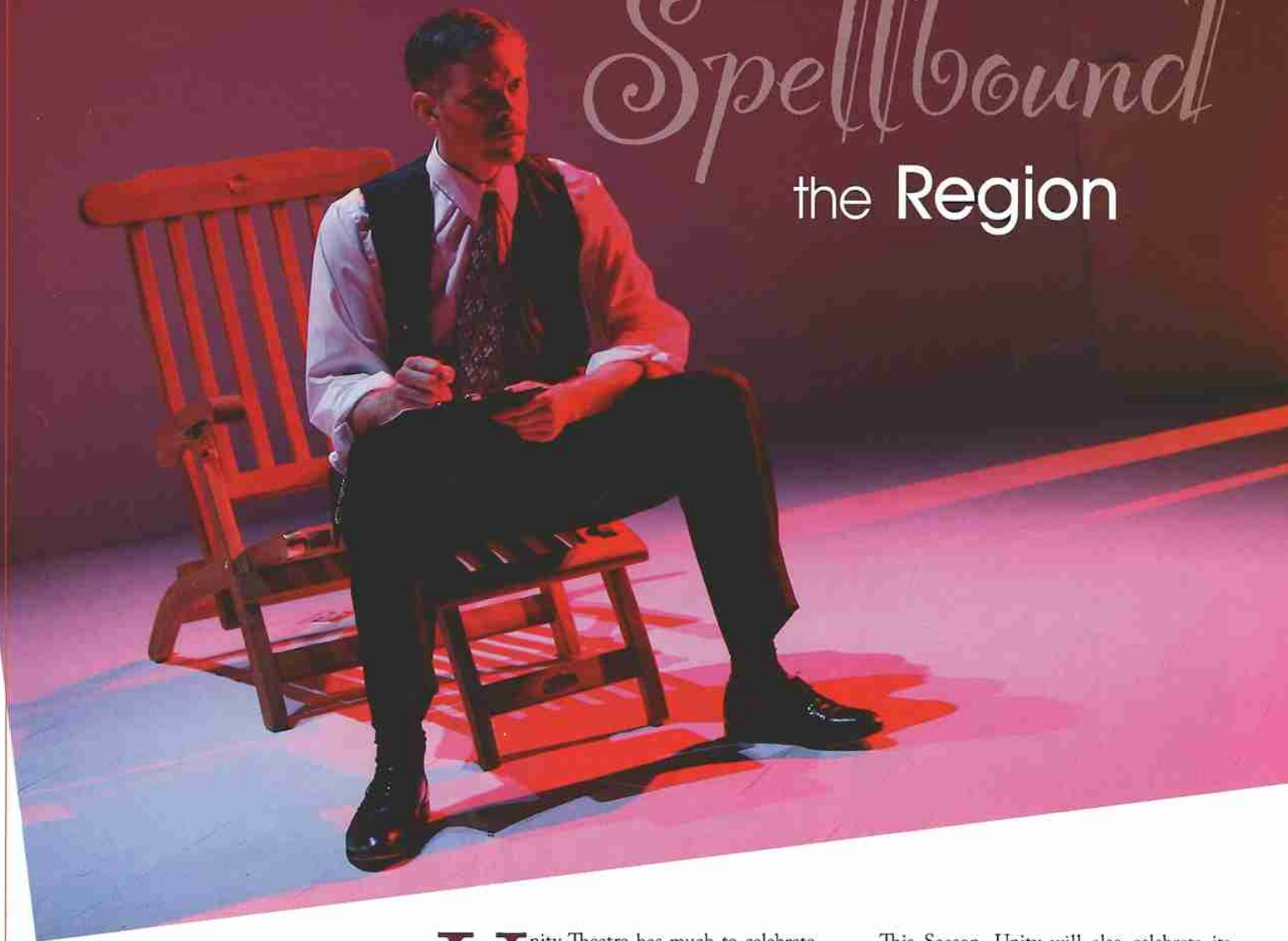
The **ARTS**

BY SHARON BRASS

PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOTT HILL AND SHARON BRASS

Unity Theatre's Magic has

Spellbound the Region



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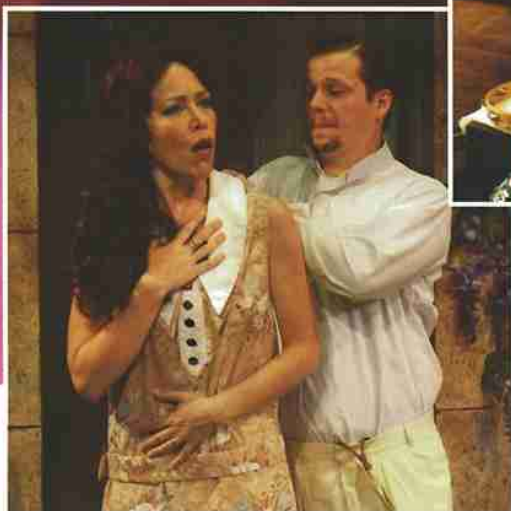
Above: Unity Theatre's artistic director Greg Wise as John in *Scotland Road*.

Unity Theatre has much to celebrate as it opens its exciting 13th Season. Attendance has steadily increased, and the most recent plays were sold out for almost every performance. Professional talent from across the region is returning, season after season, simply because they love to participate in the enchanting theatre.

The fresh line-up of Main Stage productions for the Season is very enticing, and Unity will offer a new Education Series to challenge, educate and include the community.

This Season, Unity will also celebrate its charming historical building that has made the total theatre experience so fascinating for patrons. The structure gives you a glimpse of Brenham's heritage and creates a warm ambiance.

"Unity has become the best entertainment in the area," says Steve James, a Brenham resident and long-time friend to the theatre. "Its popularity keeps growing with locals and with people from the Houston, Austin and Bryan/College Station areas."



Exceptional innovation and fun.

Unity will open the season in August with the first in its Educational Series. *The Gift of the Magi*, based on the classic O. Henry short story, is an original musical that is a work-in-progress being produced by Unity. This season, we will see and hear a staged reading of the script with an original ragtime musical score that has never before been performed.

Part of the fun will be the pre-show chat with the director, and post-show discussions with the production team and cast, to give opinions about the musical while it's in the works. After taking part in this developmental process, patrons can return for the finished, full-scale World Premiere performance in December of 2008!

Another unusual treat, *Moonlight and Magnolias* is scheduled for September as the first Main Stage production. It is a new comedy about the zany making of the epic film *Gone With the Wind*. To double our pleasure, Westwood Cinema 6 in Brenham will host special Saturday showings of *Gone With the Wind* on the big screen—a rare luxury.

There are more extraordinary adventures in store for us during the next year, and a selection of plays that are sure to please. Aspiring actors will have an opportunity to audition this year for several parts, and the community players will work side-by-side with professional actors. An early 2008 production will tour into some local schools, and youth drama camps will be offered next summer. >>

directors, actors, designers, costumers and technical experts travel from the surrounding cities to take part in Unity's productions.

Many of these professionals are renowned within their larger theatre communities. When asked why they travel so far to work, they respond with glowing comments about Unity's outstanding management, the quaint building with state-of-the-art technology, their affection for our local audiences, and the charm of Brenham itself.

According to Karen Ross of Houston Arts Alliance, "it's no surprise that Unity meets the highest expectations of Houston theatre fans, since much of Unity's talent comes from Houston and other large cities."

Small community theatre? Think again.

It's true that the intimate performance hall holds only 125 people, so there's not a bad seat in the house.

But that's the only thing about Unity that can be considered "small." Productions are grand and glorious with spectacular scenery, lavish costumes and bigger-than-life performances.

"Community theatre" brings to mind amateur actors, directors and production crews. You'll find just the opposite at Unity. Professional



The ARTS

An historic treasure.

From the minute you walk through Unity Theatre's doors, you are captivated by the structure itself. Located at 300 Church Street in downtown Brenham, Unity is in the heart of the old warehouse district. The building was erected in 1906, and was home to Schleider Furniture and Brenham Wholesale Grocery for many years. Additions to the original structure were made during the 1920's and 1930's.

"When we found the old warehouse in 1999, it was pretty rough looking," said Steve James who helped with the building

acquisition and renovation. "It stood mostly empty and neglected for about 40 years. The first time I saw it, the raw interior was partitioned between several businesses—insulation materials, auctioned items from school districts, and furniture being stored by Schleider Furniture. As bad as it looked, I was not interested. It took the vision of Teresa Beckers (Unity's co-founder and first artistic director) to understand the building's potential."

Renovation of the 23,000 square-foot warehouse took almost a year, with the help

of many dedicated community volunteers and donors. Loving attention was given to every detail, in an effort to preserve the structural features. Today, it proudly stands as a reminder of the city's past, and provides a valuable asset to the community.

Back stage tours this Season!

Unity will offer back stage tours so patrons and the public can enjoy more of the historic building, learn its history, and get a glimpse at back stage life.

"We want to share this wonderful place with people who enjoy history and beauty," said Leslie Wood, managing director. "The tours will also add to our Educational Series by offering a look at production areas and the inner workings of live theatre."

The tours will be offered throughout the season and will highlight the costume, scenery and prop shops.

A strong community asset.

Even folks who have never before been theatre fans find Unity to be irresistible. This Season's new tours and Educational Series will be fun bonuses, and offer opportunities for more people to get involved in theatre.

Unity's regional acclaim brings many visitors to Washington County. As more people are drawn back by the theatre's spell, more money comes into our community for lodging, restaurants, shops, fuel and area attractions.

Unity has a solid reputation as a dependable business and a valuable community institution. With its growing subscription base and high artistic standing, the theatre can surely look forward to a secure and promising future.

And we can count Unity Theatre as one of our blessings—a magical one. •

For more information or to order season tickets call 979-830-8358 or visit www.unitybrenham.org.

Don't miss a single performance of our exciting 13th Season!
Subscribe to get discounted tickets.

Main Stage Series	September 6-23, 2007	<i>The Gift of the Magi</i> Moonlight & Magnolias
Main Stage Series	November 1-18, 2007	The Importance of being Earnest
Special Holiday Event	December 6-23, 2007	Jacob Marley's <i>Christmas Carol</i>
Main Stage Series	February 7-24, 2008	MARY'S Wedding
Education Series	March 27-April 6, 2008	2 BY THORNTON WILDER
Main Stage Series	June 26-July 13, 2008	Forever PLAID

Back Stage Tours to celebrate our historical building!
 Sunday, August 26 at 4:30pm
 Sunday, September 16 at 4:30pm Call for details.

300 Church Street
 979-830-8358
www.UnityBrenham.org