

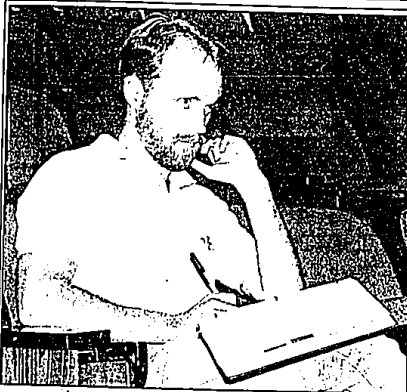
# Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



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(O/SB)



Director Gordon Reinhart of Westland listens and advises performers during rehearsal for "The Weeping Icon," premiering at Wayne State University at a benefit to establish a Modern Greek Chair on campus.



## Director faces challenge of new play

By Cathie Breidenbach  
special writer

**C**HALLENGE IS the companion of opportunity. Gordon Reinhart, who is directing the premiere performance of the modern Greek drama "The Weeping Icon" at Wayne State University, recognizes the freedom he has in directing a play for its first staged performance and the tension and challenge that go with that freedom.

who has been turning more and more to fiction in recent years. Besides her play soon to premiere, she has a novel under consideration at Simon and Schuster.

AHNEN, a diminutive Greek-American whose enthusiasm is infectious, said her three-character play is a modern Greek drama dealing with classic, universal themes. Action revolves around the visit of a young, all-American woman to the trailer home of her Greek mother-in-law after the mysterious death of the man who was the younger woman's husband and the older woman's son.

"The play tells what happens between the two women. There's a clash of generations, a clash of power and an ethnic clash between the Greek woman and the American daughter-in-law," Ahnen said.

The premiere performance and afterglow sponsored by the Modern Greek Chair Committee will help establish a permanent, independently funded Modern Greek Chair at the university. Begun in 1969, the Modern Greek Studies Program at Wayne is one of the largest and oldest in the country. The fundraising committee is working to ensure the continued vitality of the program, which teaches modern Greek languages and culture, Greek history and classical and modern literature.

Elaine Phillips of West Bloomfield, chair for the fund raiser, estimates that there are nearly 80,000 Greek-Americans in the metropolitan Detroit area. She hopes that as the program at Wayne becomes well known it will serve as a cultural nucleus for the 70 local Greek clubs in the area and for students of all backgrounds interested in Greek language, culture and history.

Reinhart, the 24-year-old director of the play, is working toward a doctorate in theater at Wayne and spent last season as an actor with the Hilberry company.

"The benefit audience will be primarily Greek and they'll understand (the play) intuitively on a deeper level," he said.

REINHART BELIEVES that good theater is about ideas and people who are larger than life. His aim as a director is to bring these ideas to the audience

by using dramatic and theatrical techniques.

"Theater ought to be theatrical," he said. He's tried to bring out the Greek identity in this modern family drama that he said "reminds me of 'Death of a Salesman' in that it's a play about memory — a lot is in the mind of the mother-in-law. The play's about death, forgiveness of other people and of yourself, and about getting on with life."

The cast includes Bette Ellis of Ann Arbor, a Greek-American veteran of off-Broadway productions, who plays the mother-in-law; Christina Hladysch, a Wayne student and Bonstelle Theatre actress, who plays the daughter-in-law; John McFarland, a drama student at Wayne, who plays the son, and stage manager Nicole Hakim of Birmingham.

For ticket information, call Elaine Phillips at 626-0924.

*'You don't have the security of tradition to fall back on, of reviews and the historical perspective of what other directors have done.'*

— Gordon Reinhart  
director of 'The Weeping Icon'



Bette Ellis (left) is Vaso Arleotes and Christina Hladysch is Karen (Kiki) Arleotes in the Greek family drama.

Photos by Rob Reed

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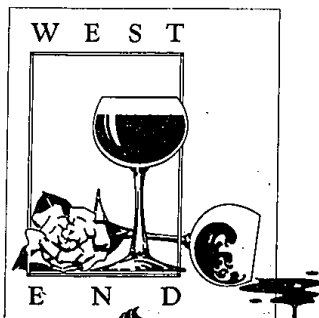
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