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Wilder" and "The Rocky Horror Show" at Meadow Brook Theatre, where Sherman was, at the time, the artistic director. Neither Regal nor Sherman have seen the 50th anniversary revival on Broadway, which starred Brian Denehy and earned the top Tony Awards. For that matter, the England-born Sherman has never seen "Death of a Salesman" on stage. (Actually, he considers Miller's later work, "A View from the Bridge," as a better play.)

Regal, on the other hand, auditioned for a secondary role in the early 1990s television version of

"Death of a Salesman," which starred Dustin Hoffman and John Malkovich. Set in the late 1940s, "Death of a Salesman" is an unrelenting examination of what constitutes "success" in American life. Miller's choice of a salesman, Willy Loman, as the protagonist demonstrates the slippery connection between faith and fantasy, and self-respect with societal expectations.

The story looks at the last days of a salesman, who fails to meet quota as he tries to hold on to his grasp of success and happiness. True happiness, Loman

figures, is to pass along his dream of success to his son. But beset by memories of his moral and business failures, Miller's Loman confronts the tragedy when the shimmer of disillusionment is rubbed away from the American Dream.

For his role as Willy Loman, Regal didn't do anything different than if he were performing Shakespeare.

"I don't get heavily involved in research," said Regal. "I rely on the other actors."

That sentiment is probably too modest. Perhaps it's his booming voice, or the stalking manner in

which he demonstrates his control of a character that Regal's upcoming portrayal should be much anticipated.

Although he concedes that most roles seem to be the "right role at the right time," there's a sense that Regal's interpretation of Loman will be more subtle and likable than Hoffman's overly intense portrayal.

During a recent rehearsal, Regal managed a delicate balance of appearing amiable, yet desperately driven.

"Willy is a complete human being," said Regal. "That's why the play is so timeless. People

can relate to him."

Appearing as both teacher and task-master during a recent rehearsal, Sherman has proven that he can blend professional with students on stage.

Two years ago, he directed one of the best productions of the year, "Angels in America," which brought together theater students at Oakland University with professional actors.

Joining Regal will be a talented professional cast, including Yolanda Fleischer of West Bloomfield, Joseph Haynes, and Arthur Beer, Regal, Fleischer and Beer teach at U of D.

Students in the production, include Bryan Barter of Farmington Hills, Drew Parker of Ferndale, Dex Anderson of Portage, Sherie McDaniel of Utica, James Mio of Berkley, Lexa Bouchard and Rashida McElvene of Detroit, Danielle Antonio of Sterling Heights, and Travis Reiff of Royal Oak.

Reiff, who portrays Riff, could be the most pleasant surprise of the production. During rehearsal, Reiff demonstrated the restrained righteousness that dramatically balances Loman's spiraling decay.

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life," said Harelk, who can currently be seen as the character Topanga's father on "Boy Meets World" (ABC, 8 p.m. Friday nights). "And the goal of my grandfather was to find the freedom to make a new life — which put the two in opposition to each other for awhile. They both had to make adjustments in that way. From talking with people, the impression that most people get after seeing this play is almost a creepy familiarity with the story. They're seeing their own family story — it may be one of the most common stories we have, being a nation of immigrants." And growing up in that rural Southern Baptist town of Hamilton, Texas, until he went to college, Harelk had an abundance of stories to choose from as

seeds for his plays. First, they were a three-generation family living together in the same house. Then in elementary school, they lived in two separate houses. "The town is so tiny that you could practically throw a rock from one side to the other so, essentially, we lived together and saw each other virtually everyday," said Harelk. "I was always very curious about my sweet, funny grandparents with the funny accent. My grandfather Haskell was very adept at telling anecdotes about the little town that he came from, so we were just showered with stories all the time."

To enhance his grandparents' arduous journey and help connect time passages in the play,

Harelk created a family slide-show montage with the sepia-toned instamatic backyard snapshots, and the old photo album prints with the mounting corners. To supplement the pictures, Harelk sifted through hundreds of back issues of the "Hamilton News-Herald" which were stacked and bundled in the attic of the newspaper's building. He uncovered old advertisements, including Grandfather Haskell's original ad for his Harelk Fruit Store, which later became a clothing store run by Mark Harelk's father. "In the play 'The Immigrant,' I think the gain exceeds the loss," Harelk adds. "The sum total is a sensation of a rich and full life in which you come out in the positive column."

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surrounding pictures taken digitally and how they can be altered. The show takes on "Time" magazine's manipulation of a picture of O. J. Simpson after he was arrested.

In some ways digital photographs are as fragile as Mathew Brady's glass plates from the Civil War because they can be so easily lost, manipulated or erased.

Image-driven celebrity and the controlled photo-op of current politics are also covered in the third segment. Yes, they even talk about Monica Lewinsky.

Schott said they obtained permission to use 3,000 still photographs, a task that proved monumental. "No wonder" no one

had attempted this before," he said. About 1,000 pictures were used in the final show. Rights to the pictures cost more than \$200,000.

Kodak helped underwrite the project, and there was also help from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, Public Television viewers, PBS and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

"We tried to look at the power of images," Schott said. "We were not as interested in photography as an art form, as such."


"For example, in World War I there was complete censorship of the war. We look at this relationship between war, photography and censorship. We explain how

it was loosened until during the Vietnam War when there was no censorship. Then the government came full circle and controlled every image coming out of the Gulf war," Schott said.

Among the pictures will be a still of the crash of the Hindenberg, Dorothea Lange's picture of a Depression-era bread line, Robert Capa's war pictures, Eugene Smith's pictures for Life, and Ansel Adams' landscapes are all part of the program. Pictures from Kosovo are included as well as a woman weeping at the Vietnam Memorial.

A book was released this month to go with the show, "American Photography: A Century of Images."

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