

Immediate Release

UMD NEWS SERVICE
724-8801, Ext. 210
February 7, 1968

Duluth--- "The First Firecracker," a mythical comedy-fantasy play for children, will be presented by UMD students at 2 p.m. on Feb. 17, 18, 24, 25 at Old Main Theater. Dr. Robert Rence, assistant professor of speech, will be the director.

Written by children's playwright Helen James, the story tells how firecrackers came into being. The play's setting is a mythical oriental empire.

The plot revolves around the kidnap of a beautiful princess by two comic witches. Going to her rescue is the Emperor's son, accompanied by the Emperor's number one dragon. During their adventure, the heroes encounter a creature called an "Arg," whom the witches made out of dark green.

Group reservations for the play may be made by calling 724-8801, Ext. 374. Ticket prices are 25 cents for children and 50 cents for adults. Old Main is located at 23rd Ave. E. and 5th St.

Ronald Olson, Robbinsdale, is cast as the Prince Yao, son of the Emperor, and Charlotte Shelgren, Freeborn, plays the Princess Mei Ling. Acting animal parts are by Ross Saarela, Duluth, as the Dragon and Peter Wisocki, Duluth, the "Arg."

Playing the Emperor is David Kunelius, Duluth, and the witches Sing Wow and Ding Bah are portrayed by Linda Swanson, Duluth, and Laura Johnson, Rush City.

Other characters are Hi Lo (the Royal Town Reminder), Charles McClintic, Duluth; Lee Lo (friend of the dragon), Bryan Ball, Duluth; Wong (the Prince's companion), Larry Trucano, Tower, Chong Chop Chop (the magician), Linwood Skafte, Duluth; the dummy, ^{Steven Martinson} ~~Edward Martin~~, Duluth; map maker, Gregory Repensky, Duluth; flag maker, John Bartholomew, Golden Valley; Emperor's attendant, Marilyn Biller, Silver Bay.