

Iowa State's

"Big-time Musical"

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THE LAST NOTES of the overture die, the lights come on, and once again a Stars Over Veishea production is underway. Behind the music, dancing, costumes and staging which the audience sees each spring at Veishea, lies 5 months of work involving nearly 750 students.

The May SOV show is born in November when the chairmen are chosen and immediately begin to work on the script. Before it is completed, this script must be approved by the three members of the faculty who will be spending much of their time in the coming weeks supervising the show. Miss Betty Toman, of the Department of Physical Education, serves as choreographer. Robert McCowen and Frank Piersol, both of the Department of Music, are chorus and band director respectively.

With the completion of the script small groups begin rehearsing their parts. Dancers for the show, including members of Dance Club and other students who have tried out, spend hours perfecting their steps. Groups chosen from Singers and Band each have daily practices during spring quarter. Some of the acts appear on television before Veishea to publicize the event.

Big Rehearsals Begin

Finally, on the Monday before Veishea, the complete show is put together for the first time. Chorus, band and dancers meet in Exhibit Hall to rehearse on a chalk-marked stage until there is some semblance of order to the performance.

There's a nervous air of expectancy during the first run-through. The dancers get the feel of the big 60-foot stage, costumes and make-up are checked, and, for the first time, the chairmen can see how their show really looks. Rehearsal continues that night until most of the kinks have been worked out, and the tired personnel can stumble home to bed.

The final dress rehearsal is Wednesday night, after which the troupe rests until the Friday performance.

Although the glamour of Stars Over Veishea goes to students who perform in it, a great deal of the credit for a successful show should go to those working behind the scenes.



Four chorus girls surround Bruce Johnson in a SOV scene.

It takes hundreds of students to manipulate the tons of steel, boxes of make-up and bolts of material needed to produce a successful SOV. These are the students who spend many weary hours making the costumes, writing publicity releases, constructing and painting the 6,000 square feet of stage flats and scenery, and erecting the 24,000 pounds of steel scaffolding used to support the stage.

Underlying the fun and hard work that goes into the show is the common hope, shared by every member of cast and crews, that there will be no rain during the nights of final performance. A lot of joking is done about the rain, but everyone realizes the consequences. A rainy day would cause the loss of the entire 5 months of work and the \$4,000 required to produce the show, since it is so big that it cannot be moved inside.

Stars Over Veishea is remembered for its wealth of singing, dancing and lavish settings, and this year's show follows that tradition. Its theme is centered around a parade of holidays, including the Fourth of July, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter.

SOV of 1954

Scenes will vary from an old-fashioned park to a modern dance number, a community Christmas tree decorating party, a royal court and finally the sophisticated Easter parade. Music has been chosen from the best Broadway hit shows.

The next 2 months will go quickly for those planning the 1954 show. Already the casts are rehearsing and set and stage crews are drawing up their plans. All are looking forward to the same goal, the one shared by thousands of others who will attend Veishea: To watch the stage light up soon on another Stars Over Veishea.