

## ***The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other***

**Peter Handke** got the idea for the play after spending the day on the terrace of a cafe on a little square in Muggia, Italy. There, in front of him, life passed by. Ordinary people on their way about their business not knowing who just passed before them or who will come next. That idea, transposed to the theatre, let Handke escape the bonds of realism and explore a world of heightened images, where characters transcend time and place. Characters surge forward in their solitary lives, giving way to others who momentarily seek human connection, and eventually to others who stop, as if at an oasis, with a need for community and shelter from a storm.

### **Bringing the play to the Kelsey Theatre at St. Olaf College**

Our stage is a little square. Where? Anywhere. There is no story, no plot and no dialogue. Not a word is spoken. This is a play about observation and wonder. Hundreds pass by and we get to see only seconds of their lives as they hurry through the square. Who are they, where did they come from and where are they going? The observer gets to fill in the blanks and complete each story. The square becomes the central character, in the brightness of the day, with its architecture directing the ebb and flow and the sounds of the immediate environment, the things invisible to us behind the walls or up in the air, providing a kind of soundscape to frame the action.

The 22 actors were given a great challenge: create hundreds of characters and convey something of the life of each character, through action only, in a five or ten second cross. And so they did.

*-Bob Rosen, director*

### **Design Process**

Researching city squares provided over thirty possibilities for the production. They covered a range of time periods and a wide variety of styles- some realistic, others stylized.

Creating a stage space that allowed many varied entrance points as well as flexibility for movement was worked out with 3D modeling in Vectorworks as well as through traditional white models.

Final research images were selected and integrated into the white model and elevation sketches.

*-Brian Bjorklund, scenery designer*