

THEATRE

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Eugene Opera's
Die Fledermaus

Once again the Eugene Opera presents a New Year's production of Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* ("The Bat"), December 30 and 31, in the Silva Concert Hall at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

This light-hearted operetta, to be performed entirely in English, is a traditional New Year's production. It centers around an elegant nineteenth century Viennese masquerade party, complete with mistaken identities, romantic entanglements and slapstick humor. Elaborate sets

and costumes add to the festive atmosphere.

Accompanying the December 31 performance are a pre-performance gourmet dinner, for \$15, at the Eugene Hilton, and a New Year's Eve Party, for \$18.50, afterward. Tickets for either or both of these events are available at the Eugene Opera Box Office, 1231 Olive Street. Tickets for *Die Fledermaus* are also available at the Opera Box Office or the Hult Center Box Office. Student, senior, and CCPA members discounts are available. Call 485-3985 for more information.

Holiday Comedy at the Brass Rail

The Case of the Missing Messiah

Jerusalem. 30 A.D. An unlikely place and time for a mystery story by a contemporary theatre troupe. But, *On the Edge* is no ordinary theatre troupe. They have made a successful and rapid transition from short comedy skits and improvisations to their first full-length play, now showing at the Brass Rail.

The Case of the Missing Messiah features *On the Edge* regulars—Ernesto Ravetto, Janet McIntyre, Martha Moyer, Jerry Campbell, Dan Bruno, and Cheyney Ryan—plus Rebecca Proctor and Ken Hof, most recently of *Jesse and the Bandit Queen*, which also played at the Brass Rail earlier this year.

Ernesto Ravetto portrays a

1930's "Sam Spade" type private investigator, hired by Mary Magdalene (Janet McIntyre) to find the missing body of the prophet Jesus. The others play numerous roles, making quick costume changes between scenes, to fill the play with all the familiar Biblical characters and a few others as well.

The play is cleverly staged and scripted (by *On the Edge* players), mixing the '30s-style costuming and dialogue with 2000-year-old history. Replete with hilarious one-liners and plays on words, the troupe moves quickly through nine scenes in two acts, as the mystery is unraveled.

The full-house audience was not left wanting for entertainment and laughter. Imagine Pontius Pilate, played by Jerry Campbell, as a debauched Roman bureaucrat far removed from the "religious fanatics" in his realm.

Each of the cast, director Hans Christofferson, stage manager Jacs Bruscato, and assistant stage manager Charlie Akers were deserving of the enthusiastic applause opening night. For a real change of pace this holiday season, try *The Case of the Missing Messiah*, December 22-24 and 26-30, 9 p.m., at the Brass Rail. Doors open at 8:15.

—Bill Snyder

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