

Touch of Venus, Men's Dormitory Under Construction Said Mediocre

By Donna Maulding Lehner
Emerald Critic

The University theater's production of S. J. Perleman, Ogden Nash and Kurt Weill's musical comedy "One Touch of Venus" is, at times, a bright, melodic and humorous piece. The script is mediocre and the humor was only humorous in spots.

"One Touch of Venus" is F. J. Hunter's first venture into the realm of directing a musical comedy, and I am sure many of the problems this show has will be cleared up in his following endeavors.

For example an audience seeing this type of drama is willing to accept an appearing and disappearing statue with aid of thunder and lightning. It is disillusioning when, at the end of the show, the statue is revolved manually to make it disappear.

The orchestra was not of a high calibre, and detracted from the musical numbers. Weston Brockaway, though, did a fine job with the limited amount of talent he had at his disposal.

If we may digress for a moment, we would like to comment on the reason for this. There seems to be a feeling of dislike by the music school for the drama department. No—I won't say that . . . but they definitely are not co-operative, in any way.

The music school made it quite obvious that they did not wish their students to participate in this production. Musical comedy is strictly an American phenomenon. It seems to me that the music school would be glad to have their students participate . . . or are they too highbrow?

Verla Thompson's "Venus" was sexy and vivacious. If she had squared her shoulders she would have been a far more convincing goddess.

"I'm a Stranger Here Myself" was Miss Thompson's most realistic song delivery.

Whether it was through an oversight of the director or Larry Swanson's characterization, the character of Rodney Hatch never made the transition from the mealy-mouthed man to the self-directed person he should have been after he received 'the touch.'

Other than this, we felt Swanson's song delivery and characterization of this mousy man was quite convincing.

Audrey Mistretta vocally portrayed the sarcastic secretary, but was so beautiful that the characterization did not come across. Therefore "One Touch of Venus" was ridiculous, as one look at Miss Mistretta would tell you she had more than one touch.

Paul McMullen made a suave Savory, and his execution of "Dr. Crippen" was fine. He added a great deal to the production, and seemed to fit his part.

John Jensen's and Barbara Johnson's choreography was an outstanding part of the show. Their takeoff on the modern dance in scene eight was delightful, as was "Ozone Heights." Miss Johnson added spark, always, to the dancing numbers.

Many of the minor characters were very well done. Outstanding were Marilyn Paterson and Dalece Peterson.

Also in his category, William Veatch added a great many chuckles to the production.

Singer to be Featured

Friday at Four today in the Student Union fishbowl will include songs by Chick Nichols, freshman in liberal arts. The program was planned by Russ Cowell, sophomore in liberal arts, and Sally Jo Greig, freshman in liberal arts.

by Joe Gardner
Emerald News Editor

Women of Carson, look to your laurels! With the completion of the new \$1,250,000 Virgil D. Earl hall in September, 1955, University of Oregon men will have a dormitory every bit as modern, luxurious and comfortable as yours.

Construction on the four-story building, first permanent men's dormitory to be built on campus since John Straub hall was finished in 1929, began during final week of winter term.

The ground breaking on the lot back of Straub climaxed a full year of planning, according to H. P. Barnhart, director of dormitories. Many informal discussion sessions between the architects, Church, Newberry and Roehr of Portland, and the University's dormitory policy committee were held before final plans were drafted, he said.

The underlying philosophy that went into the planning was a desire to fit students into dormitories to the best advantage of both the University housing system and the individuals themselves, Barnhart said.

Divided Into Units

With this thought in mind, the committee decided to divide the 328-man dormitory into five separate units connected by covered walks on the first floor only. Each unit will be connected to an expanded and remodelled Straub kitchen. The entire new building will face Emerald street.

It is the hope of the administration that the separate units, which will house approximately 65 men each, will create closer ties among residents and stimulate more pride in their dormitory, said Barnhart. The division will also aid the counseling program, especially if the units are used for freshmen as is now planned, he added.

Each of the units will have its own lounge, complete with fireplace and easy chairs. To save a little wear and tear on the lounges, the all-cement basements are being left unfurnished for recreation rooms. Ping-pong facilities and card tables can be installed in these basement rooms at a later date.

The lounges will give access to individual dining rooms connected to the Straub kitchen, which will serve as a "central service core" for both Straub and Earl halls. The dining rooms are designed so that meals can be served either cafeteria or family style, Barnhart said.

Suite for Housemother

In addition, the central unit will have a complete suite for a housemother and several parlors in which to entertain guests or parents.



IT'S JUST A PILE of lumber and a few holes in the ground at this stage in its construction, but the new Virgil D. Earl hall, men's dormitory, will be completed by September, 1955, at a cost of \$1,250,000 and will house approximately 328 men.

All of the rooms in the new dorm are planned for two-man occupancy. Most of these combination study-sleeping rooms face outward toward the street, while the majority of the rooms facing on the inner courtyard, overlooking the kitchen area, are service rooms.

Furnishings for the new building will be selected under the guidance of the architects and are included in the \$1,250,000 cost. Built-in furniture will be constructed by the University physical plant.

The exterior of the building will feature a brick veneer, similar in appearance to that of nearby Carson hall and the Student Union. Although it is impossible to match the weathered bricks of the adjoining Straub hall, the new building will complement its neighbor structure and blend in nicely with the other two buildings, according to Barnhart.

Financed From Fees

The new dormitory is being financed entirely out of dormitory fees and such housing revenue as the sale of trailers previously used for temporary housing back of the tennis courts.

When all the first bids on the project were too high and had to be rejected by the State Board of Higher Education in February, it became necessary to trim a few

items from the plans to meet the construction figure approved by the board. Such items as a food conveyor system, dumb waiters and exterior brick damp proofing were eliminated at a saving of nearly \$55,000.

The construction was not cheapened, nor was quality sacrificed by these modifications of the original plan, Barnhart declared. Non-essentials were eliminated, so that the high quality of the other features could be maintained.

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