

ORT production quick-witted, disturbing twist of melodrama

Indulgences in the Louisville Harem is a haunting play — the kind that leaves a persistent echo in your mind long after leaving the theater. Though labeled a comedy, it cheats a bit, straddling the realms of tragedy with a decisive grip.

ives, a Professor Amos Robillet (Bill Geisslinger) and his assistant Winfield Davis (Michael Cadigan), and their lives are turned upside down.

Bantering the word Science about like a revered idol, the two gentlemen introduce themselves

the sisters until...

Enter the twist of melodrama. Orlock doesn't really lead us up to the plausibility of the ending and therein lies the major complaint with the script; the ending is not as substantial as the build-up of tension and revealing of character warrants. Otherwise it is a marvelous vehicle for a show of talent from an aspiring theater.

Jane Van Boskirk's performance as Florence is riveting. It's almost as if her recent role as a sexually repressed woman in *The White Whore and the Bit Player* (another ORT production) was in preparation for this more subtle one. The same bottled up pain is there, and when she meekly winces, "Help me," she makes the plea reverberate. As Viola, Jane Stevens-Jones has the sort of face that can display child-like wonderment alongside the wearing neuroses of an unfulfilled adult. But it's a dangerous combination and Stevens-Jones brings out that volatility.

Michael Cadigan, as Winfield, carries a lot of the weight in the comic sequences and matches up to it. His rapid voice changes are accompanied by an untiring smile and glint in his eyes that make his con man side even more ambiguous. As the Professor, Bill Geisslinger doesn't have to deal with voice inflection but instead puts his acting skills into facial expression and swagger. The character with the least possibility for revealing himself, he nevertheless brings out a lot through each feature of his face.

Andrew Traister's set is dominated by expansive layers of sheer gauze, enveloping entrances and exits in an ethereal haze and absorbing the sharpness of colored lights. It is a ghostly and delicate set, carefully crafted to combine the straight-backed puritanical lines in the furniture and the fluid, erotic suggestiveness in the lace and curtains.

The play runs tonight through April 2 and April 6-9, with curtain times at 8 p.m. and additional 2 p.m. showings April 1 and 8. Tickets are \$2.50, \$3.50, and \$4.50, 50 cents less for students and senior citizens.

By CHERYL RUDERT

Indulgences in the Louisville Harem

Oregon Repertory Theatre's production of *Indulgences* is the west coast premiere of this recent work by John Orlock. A success at Actor's Theatre of Louisville's New Play Festival of 1977, the play is a fast-paced twist of the melodrama form. Under Bill Ritchie's direction it receives a tight, balanced treatment that brings out the wizardry of its word-play and makes it one of the more exciting pieces ORT has staged.

Set in slightly turn-of-the-century Louisville, the play centers around two thirty-ish, unwed sisters, Florence (Jane Van Boskirk) and Viola (Jane Stevens-Jones). Plagued by the fact that life is passing them by, they cling to the wisps of childhood memory dominating their deceased parents' home. Slow and steady clock chimes measure out their daily routines, which are brimming with lace, gentility, propriety and desperation.

The atmosphere is further heightened by their occasional and literal stepping out of character and plot. Here the audience is able to share their fantasies, their secret dark truths and nagging obsessions while catching a glimpse of the complexities of these two repressed sisters.

Into this environment arrives an anonymously-sent copy of a male mail-order catalogue (An open-ended mystery that invites speculation). The possibility of a spouse sends Viola and the more reserved Florence into a state of ecstasy, self-perusal and confusion. Their chosen correspondent ar-

as mesmerists from the St. Louis Institute of Science and Populism. Though their actions and sly glances imply that they are con men, there is always a lingering, ambiguous doubt about their intentions, further confused by a touching soliloquy by Winfield.

Their entrance into the sisters' parlor is a *piece de resistance* in coordination and directing. Stricken seven years ago, the Professor is only able to communicate by

Author to arrive

John Orlock, author of *Indulgences in the Louisville Harem*, is due to arrive in Eugene April 1. He will attend some of the play performances, and lead audience discussions after the shows.

Orlock is currently director of the acting program at The Theatre Studio in Minneapolis, Minn.

slate and chalk and through the vocal chords of Winfield. It doesn't take the sisters long to realize that when the Professor's mouth opens so does Winfield's and a comic Cyrano de Bergerac courtship ensures that brought a rousing applause on opening night.

The comic relief of these two ambiguous charlatans is quickly turned back to despair and confusion when the sisters discover that their betrotheds have been chased out of Pittsburgh for dubious reasons. Shattered dreams explode like shards of glass on stage and the ending looks as if it is going to be mournfully dull for

Soprano Suderburg, University's Steinhardt set Beall Hall concert

Soprano Elizabeth Suderburg and pianist Victor Steinhardt will perform works by Mahler, Bartok, Kodaly and De Falla Monday at 8 p.m. in Beall Concert Hall.

Suderburg, known for her new and non-traditional repertory, has been a guest artist at Brussels, the Stanford Summer Festival, the Universities of Michigan, Minnesota and Washington, Illinois State and CUNY. The Milwaukee native co-founded the Contemporary Group at the University of Washington in 1966, and helped the group win the Naumberg Award and a Rockefeller Grant.

Steinhardt began his performing career at age 15 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. He has studied with Aube Tzerko, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and Henri Lazarof, and earned degrees from Mount St. Mary's College and UCLA.

He has been a guest artist at Chamber Music Northwest, the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, the Sun Valley Music Festival and the University of Oregon Summer Festival of Music. He is a member of the University's music department.

For more information, contact Ray Morse or Keyte Hladky, 686-5678 or 686-5679.

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