

Theater (Continued from Page 20C)

ques. In any given piece they perform, one is apt to see not only principles of standard theater fare, but elements of yoga, meditation, juggling, acrobatics, tumbling and mimicry.

A few of the new productions on tap:

- A puppet show based on *The Search for Trollhaven* by Meredith Motson and Odd Bjerke, two Idaho authors. Gary Peschiallo, noted local puppet maker and performer is developing the project which will probably perform in late October.

- James Aday, manager/producer of the Circus, is working on a Michel de Ghelderode piece called *Christopher Columbus*, an off-the-wall comedy with contemporary political and human messages. No dates set yet.

- A major work called *Axlottott*. It will be a combined effort of several local artists including a fully sculptured environment created

by Jan Coleman, various creatures by Celeste LeBlanc, a script by novelist Kate Wilhelm and original music. The NewMime Circus will provide the live element to the complete piece. It's scheduled to open in the University's Museum of Art next spring. Afterwards, plans are being made to tour the work.

Although the lack of funding holds the group back, Barker notes, "It's actually spurred the determination to keep things going. We'd existed for five years with no financial backing and although the financial future is bleak, artistically and creatively it is anything but. Our work and the audiences' response is meaningful enough to continue."

It's sometimes difficult to track down in advance where what's performing and when with the NewMime Circus. But a call to their studio (485-6344) or a visit (343 High St) might help.

ORT plans full year of class productions

Another group many theatergoers were worried about due to this year's lack of money was the Oregon Repertory Theatre (ORT). But armed with a new Producing Director and subscription campaign, the company is carrying on full steam.

The company was originally formed by several local theater artists from various persuasions who were interested in seeing a variety of good theater done in Eugene.

During the interim, Jan Van Boskirk stepped in with a proposal to direct a play by a late 19th century Oregon playwright named Joaquin Miller, *Forty-Nine*. Over the next year this play probably had more productions in more locations in and around Lane County than any other single show in local theatrical history.

A shot in the arm was given the company who then mounted a Tennessee Williams play and a major musical, *Of Thee I Sing*.

However, the hydra heads of financial and other problems

again began to surface and the company again began to relax its output. Chief among the other problems was a lack of mutual direction.

Randi Douglas, Producing Director, mounted a production of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood* and started up several projects to overcome the financial crunch. She acquired the use of part of the second floor of the Atrium for a theater and last September the group managed to land more CETA positions than any other single theater group in Eugene.

Last year saw what was probably the most ambitious theater program ever offered by an independent (non-academic) producing company in Eugene. Children's shows, contemporary comedies, new explorations of old ideas, and two American classics, *Bus Stop* and *Death of a Salesman* were produced as well as the *Midnight Mafia*, a series of shorter, experimental pieces designed to give company members a chance to stretch artistically in

more non-traditional ways.

Though Douglas stepped down from her position in order to pursue other projects this summer and there is no CETA money for this next season, few changes have occurred in the company's thrust. It will still be offering a full season of interesting plays, under the guidance of David Lunney as new Producing Director.

Hardly a novice to this sort of position, Lunney has served as Producing Director for several theater groups around the nation

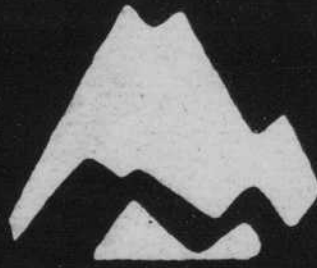
and as General Director of the Center Theatre Group of the Music Center in Los Angeles and the American Film Institute, as well as the Producer/Packager of several of NBC's Big Events, TV commercials, theatrical touring companies and Off-Broadway theaters. He views his present challenge with the ORT as one of fund-raising.

To this end, the Theater is offering a quite decent subscription package: 6 shows for the price of 4, with priority seat reservations

and special events notifications going to subscribers first. For more details, call ORT at 485-1946.

The company has one more show to offer in its summer season, *Hold Me*, a series of satirical Jules Feiffer sketches based on his cartoons. The show will be directed by Judd Parkin, who directed *Taming of the Shrew* this year in Ashland and will play Sept. 29 and 30, Oct. 1, 5-8, 12-15, 19-21.

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