

# Theater

**Miss Margarida's Way**  
By Roberto Athayde  
Directed by Louise Christofferson  
Oregon Repertory Theatre  
Midnight Mafia  
Through Saturday

To put it in the vernacular, *Miss Margarida's Way* is a mixed bag.

Apparently based on adolescent schoolboy fantasies extended into reality, the play is an hour of interaction between an eight-grade teacher and her class ... represented by the audience. If the script has any real point, it is difficult to find. Perhaps it is best described as an "experience" piece, in that the value, such as it is, seems to lie in the experience of viewing the play.

To begin with, the reviewer

must admit he is rather tired of plays which are obscene simply for the sake of being obscene; and *Miss Margarida's Way* certainly falls into that category. A good deal of its humor is derived from sexual innuendo or outright visual and verbal obscenity. This sort of thing can be effective, but this particular script doesn't achieve that distinction. The production given it, however, does.

Jacque McClure, one of Eugene's most accomplished and respected actresses, is little short of brilliant as Miss Margarida. She has manufactured a genuine character from the stereotyped and flat pieces provided by the playwright, and she simply soars. The play is funny, but it works because of the control McClure exercises over the situation, and her ability

to draw out both the inevitable and the unexpected. She is a master of silence and expression, and these qualities have served her well here.

In lesser hands, this script would be mostly a bore. McClure has managed to infuse it with life and joy (albeit an admittedly perverse joy). Since this is essentially a one-woman show (though Dougald Park has a nice moment at the end), it is difficult to determine how much of the success is due to the actress and how much to director Louise Christofferson. In this case, it is likely that the two worked very smoothly together, since the rhythms are so well-modulated, the changes so distinct.

So what we have is a fine performance from a fine actress in a flawed script. But the performance is more than worth both the cost of the ticket and the thinness of the script.

*Miss Margarida's Way* continues tonight, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday at midnight as well. Tickets are \$2.50. Call 495-1946 for reservations.

By Dan Hays

# Theater

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show is at its best in these lively crowd scenes, although VLT veteran Bud Winstead as Uncle Smelucue darn near steals a couple of those scenes.

Katy Clay, a newcomer to this community theater, is perfect as the doomed Barbara Allen.

Orr cannot be accused of underplaying the witch-boy's demonic intensity. His dark, evil-eyed stance borders on annoying, but it is memorable. I recall quite vividly his demonically smug pose after outwrestling Barbara's other suitor

with a mere wave of his hand.

The program credits nearly everyone in the show with lending a helping hand on Al Strobel's marvelous set. The lighting by Betty Sherman and choreography by Susan Zadoff were also very well done.

All in all, this glimpse of events when the moon is dark is good fun, burdened neither by messages nor morals. I reckon I kin recommend it to jest about anybody.

By David Grober

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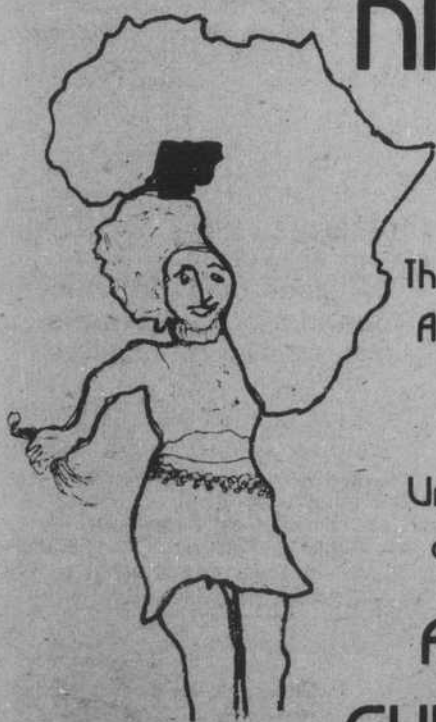
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