

Zany cabaret performance sizzles at roasting Reagan

By Brett P. Bigham

Of the Emerald

Black humor runs rampant in Mainstage Cabaret's cutting production of the musical "Rap

Master Ronnie" written by Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau. Taking shot after shot at the Reagan administration, this production proves to be an

entertaining evening of two-faced, back-stabbing political fun.

When the supporting cast of seven bursts onto stage in the opening number, "Rap Master Ronnie," the audience is cued into the flavor of the evening. It's to be a roast of Reagan and his political views, from nuclear war to social policies.

Trudeau's sharp lyrics point out, "Ronnie's a cat who's paid his dues, we've had our share of Negro news, got an open mind on civil rights, my youngest son grew up in tights."

Director Joe Zingo has pulled a zany but important performance from his talented cast, and in doing so also makes the audience look at the role Reagan plays in national and international politics. The show is a reflection of not only the government — it is also a look at us as Americans.

Leading the show, and the country, is Matt Bonham as Reagan. Bonham's bumbling caricature of the president is nothing less than hilarious. The actor's delivery of Reagan's quotes (actual quotes, mind you) makes you realize the depths of Reagan's political confusion. It is a slick performance that borders on the edge of overdoing it but never quite takes that last step.

As Reagan's wife and first lady, Dei Olson also blends

caricature with shades of the "real" Nancy in a broad and radically funny performance. As she laments giving up shopping to help fight drug abuse in "My Kids," Olsen chirps, "I ask them to stay clean, obey all the laws, don't ask if they're hungry, that isn't my cause."

The bulk of the show is performed by a talented ensemble of six that changes clothes and characters every few minutes. The explosive energy of the actors keeps the show buoyant and fresh with each new scene, and the beautiful harmonies they construct give richness to

every group number.

Priscilla Walker's near-monotone chanting produces the best number of Act I in "The Assistant Undersecretary of State for Human Rights." It is chillingly haunted and mesmerizing.

Cat Stewart pumps out a bluesy jazz number in "Take That Smile Off Your Face." The women cavort on stage in many roles, including punk rockers, island girls and children reflecting on the loss of their favorite lake to pollution.



Photo by Shu-Shing Chen

Matt Bonham, below, plays Ronald Reagan in Rap Master Ronnie's performance.

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ownership." Registration at the security office is free.

Bicycle theft is one of the

most prevalent crime problems on campus, Tanner said. The security office's most recent

records report that in the month of December, 1986, 33 bikes were reported stolen.

A bike owner can take certain precautions to prevent theft, Hunter said. The bike should be registered, parked in a well-lighted, well-traveled area and locked with a sturdy lock, such as a kryptonite.

"It's ridiculous when someone buys a \$500 bike and then locks it with a \$2.99 lock," she said.

The kryptonite locks pose a special problem to the Security officers, however: Since they are impossible to cut, impoundment also is impossible. In these cases, the officer puts an additional kryptonite on the bike, serving as a boot.



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