

## ARTS

### "Kabuki/Bacchae" visually exciting

Greek play adapted to Japanese style

By Layne Lakefish  
Encore Entertainment Editor

Just when the majority of University students are getting settled in and ready to start the term, University Theatre students are already rehearsed and ready to go.

"Kabuki/Bacchae," a continuation of last spring's performance, will re-open tomorrow night at 8 in Robinson Theatre, 1109 Old Campus Lane. Additional 8 p.m. performances are scheduled for Sept. 28 and 29.

The title may tilt some heads and confuse some minds, but don't fret. There's an easy explanation.

The play is based on the original Greek play, "The Bacchae" by Euripides. In the play, the deity Bacchus is born to a mortal mother, which gives rise to conflict between the two worlds.

The twist, and hence the name "Kabuki/Bacchae," came when University co-directors decided to set the age-old Greek play in early Shinto Japan. With this adaptation comes an obvious change in the main character: Greek god Bacchus becomes the Japanese demon god Hi-No-Kami.

"We're taking a classic Greek tragedy and rendering it in the style of Japanese Kabuki, a 300-year-old theater form in Japan," said Jerry Williams, co-producer of the play.

He said he fears people may not come to see the play because the title is so out of the ordinary, but speaks of rave reviews the play got all over Eugene last spring.

"I want people to gamble," he said. "They won't regret it."

"This will be an exciting theatrical experience," said Janet Descutner, co-producer. "In the Kabuki style, the movements are as important as the words."

By taking the play and presenting it in the Kabuki style, Euripides' play suddenly becomes very movement- and style-oriented. Vocality also plays a key role as one can hear when the orchestra plays to back up the movements and the



Photo by Sean Paston

Eric Hansen (left, in the role of Hi-No-Kami) and Michele Fox (Kugeaku) are appearing in the play "Kabuki/Bacchae," a combination of ancient Greek and Japanese drama. It runs Sept. 27, 28, and 29 at 8 p.m. in the Robinson Theater. Tickets are \$6.50 general admissions, \$4.50 for students.

moods on stage.

"Visually, the play is highly stimulating through costume, movements and color," she said. "There are also a lot of dramatic stage effects such as using silk for the floor during an earthquake."

Aside from the visuality of the play, Williams said it also deals with a lot of ritual and violence.

"This is not a ho-hum event," he said. "There's a lot of violence including a dismemberment on stage. It's violence in a stylized manner."

The play, which was called "a hypnotically engaging show

that's both entertaining and relevant today" by *The Register Guard*, is expected to run for 90 minutes, with an intermission.

"Consider this a short evening of scintillating theater as opposed to a long night of rhetoric," Williams said.

"Last spring, word of mouth didn't spread fast enough and some people were left wishing they'd seen the play," Descutner said. "This is the chance."

Tickets can be purchased for \$6.50 for general admission and \$4.50 for students by calling 346-4191.

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