

DRAMA

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To that end, The Lord Leebrick Theater Company's first offerings are two contemporary one-act plays with strong political and existential themes. The Harold Pinter play "One for the Road" explores governmental power abuse, while "Play" by Samuel Beckett is a disquieting portrayal of the hereafter.

Leebrick said the plays fit well into his theater company's mission to produce serious drama.

"With the kind of theater we're interested in starting, we do want to turn some heads," he said. "We're interested in doing intense theater."

When the Oregon Repertory Theater was still producing plays, Eugene drama hounds had a place to turn for serious plays. But when the group went under in 1987, no one picked up the torch.

"A lot of Eugene groups do musicals and light drama — plays that are a little more safe," Leebrick said. "In Eugene, with the political climate the way it is, we feel that this town would support a theater that was a little more on-edge."

Kim Donahey, who is one of the three actors in "Play," said the darkness of the piece presented unique acting challenges. She plays the role of a disembodied soul remembering her traumatic life experiences and unaware of the presence of her two former companions.

"It's very intense," Donahey said. "I've studied acting at the University, and the talk is about the relationship between the characters on stage. But in 'Play' they aren't relating."

Donahey's eight-year-old son, Daniel, acts in "One for the Road." He portrays a small child who is imprisoned with his family and violently interrogated for crimes against the state.

Donahey said she worried about having her son act in such a vivid play.

"The Pinter piece is very, very dark," she said. "I was a little concerned about him playing in the play. But his scene is separate from the others, so he goes home after he's done."

Artistic considerations aside, the one-act plays made good economic sense.

Leebrick said the theater group has gone to great lengths to keep costs down by constructing "skeleton sets" that rely more on the audience's imagination than on elaborate set design.

"The skeleton set is one way in which you save money, but we don't want to always be limited by our budget," Leebrick said.

Accomplishing that goal means organizing a theater season with regular performances and a faithful audience. The regular season will begin this September with seven performances planned through June of 1993.

A devoted following is a much larger question mark.

Rich Sheelands, director of operations at the Hult Center, said building a following is a make-or-buy factor for most theater companies.

"They need to provide a season of solid shows," Sheelands said. "That will give them an economic foundation that's fairly solid."

Leebrick has faith that The Lord Leebrick Theatre Company can survive any initial setbacks.

"Say this show is not a big success," Leebrick said. "We'll go on. As long as we keep putting on shows and keeping costs low we'll continue and build an audience as we go."

The first Lord Leebrick Theatre Company performance will be Saturday at 8:15 p.m. in the Broadway Building at 30 E. Broadway. A 2:30 matinee performance will also be offered on Sunday. Other performances are scheduled for July 2 and 3.

General admission is \$6. Students and seniors get in for \$5. Tickets will be available at the door.

TAXES

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tem rather than implementing a "Band-Aid" solution, replacing only part of the money lost by Measure 5, providing property tax relief and cutting costs in state government.

Ames said the governor plans to eliminate about 4,000 government positions by July 1, 1993. Those cuts should result in a savings of \$165 million in general fund money.

However, for the 1993-95 biennium, the state must replace more than \$1 billion cut from the general fund by Measure 5 property tax relief.

Roberts fished for input about her tax reform proposal during six "Conversations with Oregon" from June 9-18.

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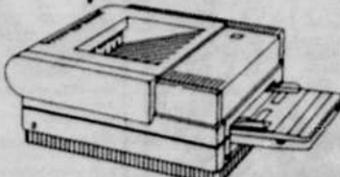
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