

# UNIVERSITY

## Play examines boy's coming of age in war

By Lia Saliccia  
Oregon Daily Emerald

"This is a play about me when I was 14, back during the war, when we had this house at a place called Rose Hill, on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie, near Buffalo, New York, where I was born ..."

And so begins the University Theatre production of "What I Did Last Summer," a look back into the past of Charlie Higgins (Terry Gildea) during the year of his coming of age.

"This is also a play about me," says Grace (Janet Gupton), Charlie's mother, "trying to run a house, trying to keep things going, trying to give two children a good healthy summer, away from the city, away from the polio scare, even during the war... while my husband is away ... when any minute some Kamikaze pilot could dive down and blow him to smithereens!"

"I can tell you one thing this play is not about. It's not about me," says Elsie (Rachel Johnson), Charlie's 19 year-old sister, whose inner turmoil is barely masked by a mixture of snotty arguments and wise affirmations.

The quiet family summer is turned upside down when Charlie gets a "job" from Anna Trumbull (Siouxsie Suarez), who is known in town as the Pig Woman. The subject of town gossip, Anna breaks the 1940s mold by living alone in a house bought for her by the married doctor who was her lover, teaching art lessons and living independently.

After Charlie is taken under Anna's wing, he becomes torn between a loyalty to his mother's world, characterized by chatter of how his father is at war, and the Pig Woman's world, where he is encouraged to skinny-dip in the lake, play in the mud, and to create "art projects."

Charlie becomes so involved

with the world at Anna's place by the lake that he drifts away from his friends, 17-year-old Ted (Jeff Foley) and 14-year-old Bonny (Marni Afryl). Ted and Bonny are curious about what Charlie spends so much time doing with the Pig Woman, who they suspect does not wear underwear.

"What I did Last Summer," directed by Shelley Douma, will kick off the new University Theatre season with opening night Wednesday at 8 p.m. The play runs Oct. 20-23 and Oct. 28-30. All performances begin at 8 p.m. in the Arena Theatre in Villard Hall.

Prices for the play are as follows: \$5 for the general public, \$4 for senior citizens, University faculty/staff and non-University students, and \$3 for University students.

Tickets are available at the University Theatre Box Office in Robinson Theatre. Tickets can be reserved by calling 346-4191.



LESIE GALLIANO for the Emerald  
Siouxsie Suarez gives a goodbye kiss to Terry Gildea in a scene from "What I Did Last Summer." The play opens Wednesday.

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