

'The Learned Ladies': a pure delight

By Anne Moser-Kornfeld
for the Oregon Daily Emerald

The University production of Moliere's *The Learned Ladies* came alive with flavor and pure delight Friday night. This comical farce, set in late 16th century France, is a translation by Richard Wilbur. The director, Craig Willis, brought to the stage wonderful examples of what theater aspires to be.

The Learned Ladies is the story of intelligent women and gender bending. The roles of men and women are not what they always seem to be. Moliere's play is like a parfait with many rich layers. The banter of poetic dialogue and the entertaining play is great fun. The play works very well in relation to issues on campus and in Oregon about gender bending, sexuality, the Oregon Citizens Alliance and the coming-of-age decisions often faced by students during their time spent at the University.

The set designer, Jeffrey Cook, created an outstanding one-piece stage with the use of soft, luxurious pillows, clothing strewn about and fringe elements of education forever surrounding the main stage. At times, the use of the mirror at stage left while an actor watched him or herself primping appeared a bit overstated. For the most part, though, the effect came across as appropriate, engaging and terribly wonderful to watch.

The show music, however, didn't fit the flow of the play. The music sounded like circus tunes. An organ grinder and pipe music ran throughout the play. The scene changes didn't fall into place as well as they could have if the music had sounded less mechanical. It was reminiscent of a

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carnival, but it didn't connect with the action.

Costume designer Alexandra Bonds used the influences of Louis XIV's court and styles worn by 1920's film stars like Gloria Swanson. She blended satin, lingerie and silky materials with black leather and contemporary creations, although those worn by the servant Martine, played by John Sturgill, initially appeared to clash. The actors themselves took Bonds' designs and, through their movement, produced an effect that was sensuous, almost delicious.

The actors seemed to thrive in this environment. With the snap of a fan, Armande, played by Jason Griffin, dominated Henriette, played by Julie Regimbal, in demanding that she stand up to her retaliatory remarks. Regimbal was fully capable of meeting the challenge, and their spicy opening dialogue set the play's pace.

Amy Sarno-Franklin, playing Ariste, and Brooke Totman, playing Vadius, could not deliver their lines as brilliantly as the two male actors they were paired with. Their comic timing was precise, but they didn't appear as large or as capable of believably portraying a man. Instead, they came across as women playing men. Their gestures were less flamboyant and more reserved than those of their male counterparts. Their voices were not strong enough in compari-

son to carry across the theater.

Brooke Totman, when paired with Erik Sniedze as Trissotin, relied more on her ability to run around the stage than on her ability to be a convincing scholar with a vendetta. But their slapstick scene worked well in suggesting a Tom-and-Jerry relationship.

There was a similar imbalance in the relationship between Ariste and Chrysdale, played by Greg James. Ariste's monologue as Chrysdale dressed didn't carry as much punch as other parts of the play. The white wig worn by Chrysdale at the end of the scene worked incredibly well, although the buildup to the joke seemed rough.

On the other hand, Lori Ferraro was in complete control as Belise. Chrysdale's lunatic sister. She stole the scenes she was in by using grand gestures that showed her strength in physical comedy.

The rest of the cast was admirable. There wasn't a weak link in the production. Tricia Rodley, Mark C. Titus and John Sturgill, in particular, played their roles to the hilt.

Say what they may — this play should be seen by the entire campus. It can be hard to follow the dialogue, however. The language construction requires some concentration until the rhythm becomes familiar because the play is very true to its translation. But, overall, the company has done a superb job.

The Learned Ladies runs Nov. 11-13 and 19-20 at 8 p.m. The box office hours at the Robinson Theater are Tuesday through Friday from 12 to 6 p.m. and from 12 to 8:15 p.m. on show nights. For ticket information, call 346-4191.

New class offered for winter term

A new racewalking class will be offered in the physical education curriculum beginning winter term.

The class, Racewalking I, is being offered because racewalking is growing in popularity. It is now an Olympic sport, said Becky Sisley, a professor of physical education who will teach the class.

Students will be taught the techniques of racewalking, watch videotapes of racewalking champions and also will have the opportunity to be judged by expert racewalkers.

Ed Kousky, a gold medalist in the World Veterans Championships in Japan two weeks ago, and Carolyn Kortge, who has won medals at national and regional championships, will come to the class as guests to help evaluate techniques, Sisley said.

Class participants also will be taught racewalking on measured courses, with the goal being to complete a 5K, which is 3.1 miles, by the end of the term, she said.

UNIVERSITY BRIEFS

• A University group beat out 125 other nominees last month to win a first-place award for Recyclers of the Year in recognition for its recycling and waste reduction achievements.

Campus Recycling, a department in the University Physical Plant, won the award during the first State Agency Recycling Recognition Program, which was held in Salem and organized the state Department of General Services.

Jon Davis, the recycling operations coordinator at the Physical Plant, won the Outstanding Individual Recycler of the Year Award in recognition of his expansion of recycled paper operations and his collection of up to 45 tons of paper each month.

In addition to Campus Recycling and Davis, other award recipients were Linda Kizer-Paquette, an administrative secretary in the Registrar's Office, who won second place in the Special Program or Project category for promoting the recycling of office supplies; Fred Babcock, direc-

tor of food service, and Glenn White, food service manager at University Housing, who won second place for the team or group category for their recycling efforts in residence halls; and Wayne Merritt, director of University Printing Services, who won third-place for Recycler of the Year for encouraging University departments to use recycled paper.

• The University will improve its energy efficiency by about 50 percent with the delivery of a new 85-ton boiler, which should be in operation by December or January.

The Central Power Station's new boiler, operating on natural gas and No. 2 fuel oil, replaced the old Dutch oven hogged-fuel boilers that were built in 1948-49 and burned wood chips. The three hogged-fuel boilers brought complaints that smoke was drifting into buildings, and as of June 1993, the three boilers could not be operated under the 1990 Clean Air Act.

Group will present Africa's true image

By Scot Clemens
Oregon Daily Emerald

When AT&T ran a graphic of the globe in an attempt to prove the company dominates the phone world, some people took it as just more proof that Americans have a skewed view of the African continent.

Although other geographic regions were represented by humans, Africa's symbolic phone user was a chimpanzee.

Saheed Adejumbi, the African Student Association's public relations officer, said it is time that a true picture of Africa is presented to the University community.

The ASA is hoping to provide an African voice to the University and its students under the theme of "The Way We Are: An African Perspective." In the next year, it will try to "reach out to African students (of all nations), make them proud of their heritage and increase the awareness of the situation on the African continent," Adejumbi said.

The ASA will also present videos, slide shows and forums dealing with historical and contemporary issues in an attempt to redeem the negative image of Africa in the Western media.

Adejumbi said Africans are often asked questions like: "Do you have a president?"

Are there wide animals in the streets? Are you going back home? (not staying in the U.S.?)."

Although he does not condemn people for asking such questions, the questions speak to the fact that misconceptions about Africa are widespread. The Africa Adejumbi knows is not the jungles and deserts that the West seems to concentrate on, but cities like his home of Lagos, Nigeria.

"There are big cities with commercial prospects," he said.

Adejumbi would also like to work toward changing the curriculum to help attract African students. He would like to see more academic departments acknowledge African culture and the effect it has had on world history.

Adejumbi praises the history department for its plans to add a professor who will teach African history full time.

"(Studying Africa) breaks down the barriers between people, and it creates respect for other cultures," he said.

The Office of International Education and Exchange is also doing a good job of making African students feel welcome and comfortable, Adejumbi said.

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