

'The Illusion' examines illusions in the heart

By Lia Saliccia
Oregon Daily Emerald

There is a dark cave where a sorceress lives. If you beg her, she will put her hand upon your heart and then conjure up images of the life of your lost loved ones. Attended by a troll, this sorceress will take you to a world far beyond her cave, where strange yet familiar people act out the sagas of their lives while you watch from the comfort of your chair.

And all you have to do to get to the cave is walk through the door of the Robinson Theatre and buy a ticket to *The Illusion*.

This well-written adaptation of a French play written in 1636 is worth the \$4.50. In true University Theatre style, *The Illusion* is a grand spectacle, complete with elaborate costumes created by Anna Lawrence and an intricate set designed by Don Naggair.

The story centers around an old man (Ryan Sahr) who visits the cave of the magician Alcanore (Heidi Schreck) in order to check up on his long-lost son (Mark Titus). She conjures scenes from his son's life and calls them "illusions."

The illusions that humans hold regarding the nature of love and reality are a central theme, and Alcanore wisely tells the old man to "expect nothing from these visions that you can't expect from life."

In a welcome turn from the stock romances where men in tights run around professing their love to starry-eyed maidens in corsets, this play shows the underbelly of life. *The Illusion* is well-tempered with reality and forces the spectator, comfortable



Julie Regimbal and Mark Titus will star in *The Illusion* which opens tonight. The play is about a

sorceress who has the power to make people's illusions real. Tickets for the play are on sale now.

THE ILLUSION

WHEN: Feb. 25-26, March 3-5, 11-12

WHERE: Robinson Theater

ADMISSION: \$8, \$6, \$4.50

watching from his chair, to see the pain that inevitably comes with love.

Since this play is about the imagery we create ourselves, the viewer should pay close attention to the illusions created on stage by the crew. Lighting, designed by Steve Ransom is

beautiful and effective. It works to snap us from one world to the next. To the observant spectator, the set is also thematic.

This play will be enjoyable to those who liked the fall term mainstage production of *The Learned Ladies*. The two romantic leads (Mark Titus and Julie Regimbal) are the same, but this time their characters are more meaty. Another *Learned Ladies* hit, John Sturgill, who played a kooky maid, returns to the Robinson as a kooky prince and will probably get just as many laughs.

Director Marion O. Rossi, Jr. calls the play "theatrically fascinating, emotionally compelling and very funny."

On Sunday, March 6 at 2 p.m. there will be a benefit performance for Eugene Emergency Housing. The \$10 tickets can be purchased by calling 686-1262.

So take a leave of absence from the usual Friday night activities and step into the cave of the sorceress. In it you will not only see illusions of others, you will see reflections of yourself.



COURTESY PHOTO

Graduate gets a shot at Shakespeare

By Edward Klopfenstein
Oregon Daily Emerald

The 59-year old Oregon Shakespeare Festival is like a West Coast Broadway production. "It's big!" University alumnus Davon Russell said last week.

And Russell made it there.

But, to say Russell sweated years and years for his spot in Ashland might be hype.

"Maybe I shouldn't say this, but at the University, I had one acting class and never actually acted as an undergrad," the 28-year-old said. "I ran track at the University as an undergrad, but people said, 'You have to act.'"

Russell's first bow for the official 1994 season comes Saturday.

Does he consider himself lucky?

"If luck is when opportunity meets aptitude,

then I guess I'm lucky," Russell said. "I did the audition, so hey, I just hope they saw someone that they might want to work with."

The actor said that "Ashland is a dream. We have a lot of famous patrons coming here. You never know who is in the audience."

Putting your best foot forward in a place like Ashland isn't easy.

For instance, Russell appears in two roles in *Pool of Bethesda*, a play by Englishman Allan Cubitt that is making its American premier at this year's festival.

That's at 2 p.m.

Just six hours later, he has a part in *Hamlet*, which starts at 8 p.m.

Russell said of all his challenges, Shake-

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by Pierre Corneille
adapted by Tony Kushner
February 25-26, March 3-4, 5, 6, 11-12
Robinson Theatre • 7:10-11:00



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