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 492 E. 13th 686-2458
 Starts Friday 3/7
 12:15 Nightly Sun Mat 2:30
WILLY WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY
 COMING SOON: FIRST STRIKE



C.S. Lewis and his wife, Joy Gresham, marry so she can become an English citizen in *Shadowlands*. MICHAEL CRISP/Emerald

'Shadowlands' features solid acting

By Dennis Bolt
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Why is there suffering in the world? That is an underlying question in William Nicholson's play *Shadowlands*. The story is based on the life of children's author C.S. Lewis and the untimely death of his younger wife, Joy. Outwardly, death and suffering are explored only in an effort to understand the real role of happiness in life.

Lewis was one of the twentieth century's most beloved authors. His *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a classic children's book, and his writings on Christianity and fantasy play a large part in setting the stage for this drama. *Shadowlands* sheds light on an event that occurred late in the author's life, but it helps to explain Lewis' lifelong exploration of his role in society.

Those who have seen the Sir Anthony Hopkins film that is based on this play will be pleasantly surprised by how much of the movie's character was taken from the original play. Even without the rich scenery of the film version, the University Theatre manages to bring variety to the scenes in *Shadowlands*. A revolving stage makes the scene

changes happen quickly, and simple props work well to convey a sense of spartan mystery and 1950s restraint.

Robert Barton, the head of the University's acting program, makes a heralded return to the stage while playing Lewis. Barton plays a convincing writer and has the warmth to play Lewis with an air of authority as well as with a human side. Even though his accent is often unconvincing, Barton has the attitude and mannerisms of the middle-aged English author. Unfortunately, his overt enthusiasm for the role sometimes makes the loss of his love less believable.

Megan Smith plays American poet Joy Gresham, who comes to Oxford to meet Lewis and subsequently falls in love with the simple but elegant man. Joy is from New York, and Smith does a good job playing the straightforward poet and mother.

Joy's young son, Doug, is a small but integral part of the plot. His curiosity and inno-

cence are a perfect foil to the smug C.S. Lewis.

Lewis' brother Warren is brightly played by Greg Foote. Where Lewis is philosophical, his brother is pragmatic. At first Warren and Lewis' other buddies do not like Joy. However, Joy wins most of them over with her straightforward charm and her no-nonsense demeanor.

The drama revolves around Lewis and Joy reluctantly falling in love. Lewis marries Joy so she can gain English citizenship, even though they have not yet realized their love. They live apart, but Joy quickly succumbs to bone cancer and slowly dies.

Lewis realizes his love for Joy just as he is about to lose her.

Even though the play is two hours long, it goes amazingly fast. I almost wish there was more exploration of the true love that Lewis and Joy felt. Because I knew the story and had seen the film version, I was able to see the chemistry between the characters.

REVIEW *Shadowlands*

★★★
 (life of C.S. Lewis)

■ **WHERE:** Robinson Theatre

■ **WHEN:** March 6-8, 14, 15 at 8 p.m.

■ **COST:** \$4.50 for students, \$7 for senior citizens and Uo faculty and staff and \$10 for the general public

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Spring Term

TA 410/510 (CRN #35761, 35762) • UH 12:30-13:50

Multicultural Theatre: Women of Color

KATHY A. PERKINS, Associate Professor, current head of the theatre lighting design program at the University of Illinois, Urbana, will be teaching this course.

Kathy A. Perkins (Lighting Designer/Theatre Historian) is a graduate of Howard University (BFA) and the University of Michigan (MFA). She has designed lighting for over 250 productions throughout the United States, in addition to designing in Europe and South Africa. She has designed for such New York theatre companies and with theatres as the Negro Ensemble Company, New Federal Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), and at Carnegie Hall.

Kathy has lectured throughout the country on blacks behind the scenes in the American theatre. She is the editor of *Black Female Playwrights: An Anthology of Plays Before 1950* which won a 1990 Choice Book Award, and co-editor with Roberta Uno of *Contemporary Plays by Women of Color* which won the Association for Theatre in Higher Education 1996 Award for Outstanding Book in Theatre. Kathy is also the co-editor with Judith Stephens on the forthcoming anthology *Strange Fruit: Lynching Plays by American Women*.