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'DIA DE LOS MUERTOS'



courtesy of Maude Kerns Art Center

The Day of the Dead art exhibit at the Maude Kerns Art Center continues this weekend and through Nov. 13 — shown here is Cynthia Charat's cibachrome print "Calavera y Sol, Metepec." The Art Center is located at 1910 E. 15th Ave.



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Fierce Pussy Posse voices its opinion

■ 'Anarchist feminist collective' performs women's life experiences at eclectic local and out-of-town venues

By Yael Menahem
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Fierce Pussy Posse Cabaret Theater Company, a self-proclaimed "anarchist feminist collective," is spreading its message across Eugene.

The group performs at different venues around town, including John Henry's, Mother Kali's Books and Tsunami Books. The company made a two-hour appearance on campus Oct. 11 during National Coming Out Day celebrations.

Although the core number in the group shifts between eight to 10 members, G.L. Morrison, who's been with the group for more than a year, was the only member who agreed to speak with the Emerald. She explained that all the women in the group are supportive of each other's work and don't deny each other the right to speak to the media.

However, most women in the Posse declined to be interviewed because they feel that misrepresentations and misquotes in past media coverage distort the group's overall message.

The company performs two or three times a month around Eugene, Morrison said, and in November will venture to Washington for a show in Seattle. A show usually consists of poetry readings, short skits and songs by different members.

Morrison said she is aware that a bar like John Henry's, where mostly uninterested, usually drunk men hang out, is not always the most friendly place for her group to talk about women and minority's rights, even when supporters turn out for the show.

She pointed out that the situation is a mixed blessing since the group gets to perform, yet a portion of the crowd is not receptive to the performance art.

During one performance at John Henry's, one Posse member brought her childhood furniture onto the stage and smashed them into pieces with a baseball bat.

Another time, a member wore a prom dress and applied her make-up in a way that simulated a bruised face, as if she had been beaten by her partner. The woman then sang a version of Olivia Newton-John's "Hopelessly Devoted to You."

There is no set performance schedule during a show, rather Posse members rotate during the set. Audience reactions are usually mixed due to such harsh performances by the members, Morrison said.

"It takes a lot of courage to stand on stage to present your opinion, whatever your opinion is," Morrison said. "Every show is completely unique."

Group members meet before each show to discuss what will be performed, but the show is spontaneous with each member performing what she has written. When the Posse performed on campus, one member, Annabelle, performed a song about abortion after hearing about the anti-abortion demonstration in the EMU. Dressed in black with dyed green hair, Annabelle yelled into the microphone "kill the fetus / you'll have a better home in the sky," which prompted mixed reactions from some observers.

"I thought that the fetus song was a little too much," sophomore biology major Leah Rosin said. "I wasn't offended by it, but I thought it was as bad as the demonstration that was going on earlier today as far as being graphic."

Danna Brownell disagreed and said she thought that the song wasn't presented to spark conversation about abortion.

"Obviously it's not meant to be taken entirely seriously, but to prove a point," she said. "It's preaching to the choir, it's not meant to change minds."

The entire performance impressed Brownell.

"I think it's awesome to see women who aren't afraid to be loud and take up space and say what they think," Brownell said.

Morrison said that is the group's ultimate motivation.

"Mostly it's not a money-making venture, the object is art," she concluded.

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