

# Rally informs students of substandard building

■ Theater students and faculty argue for much needed improvements to aged Villard Hall

By Lisa Toth  
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Cramped spaces, poor ventilation, outdated technology and flooding bathrooms are only a few of the complaints of students and faculty in the theater arts department at the University.

Villard Hall, the second building erected on campus and completed in 1886, is the home of the Robinson Theatre, the Pocket Playhouse and the Arena Theatre.

An informative rally on Friday, April 7 addressed concerns with the facility. The meeting was moderated by senior theater major Rhaetia Hanscum and stage manager Jackie Jacobs. A proposal for a new \$5 million theater and facilities adjacent to the Robinson theater was rejected this year by a planning committee headed by Vice President for Administration Dan Williams and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost John Moseley. The proposal has been left off the bienniums priority list.

The rally on Friday stemmed from a written response by technical director and acting department head Janet Rose to the proposal being turned down. The response addressed the problems with the theater arts building. Rose said she has been fighting these issues for more than 13 years. She wants students to contact the administration and let them know how important the-

ater education is and how important theater facilities are to that education.

Rose also plans to meet with Joe Stone, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, to discuss making theater arts a priority.

Williams and Moseley could not be reached for comment.

Students brought up other solutions to the problem during the Friday rally, including generating

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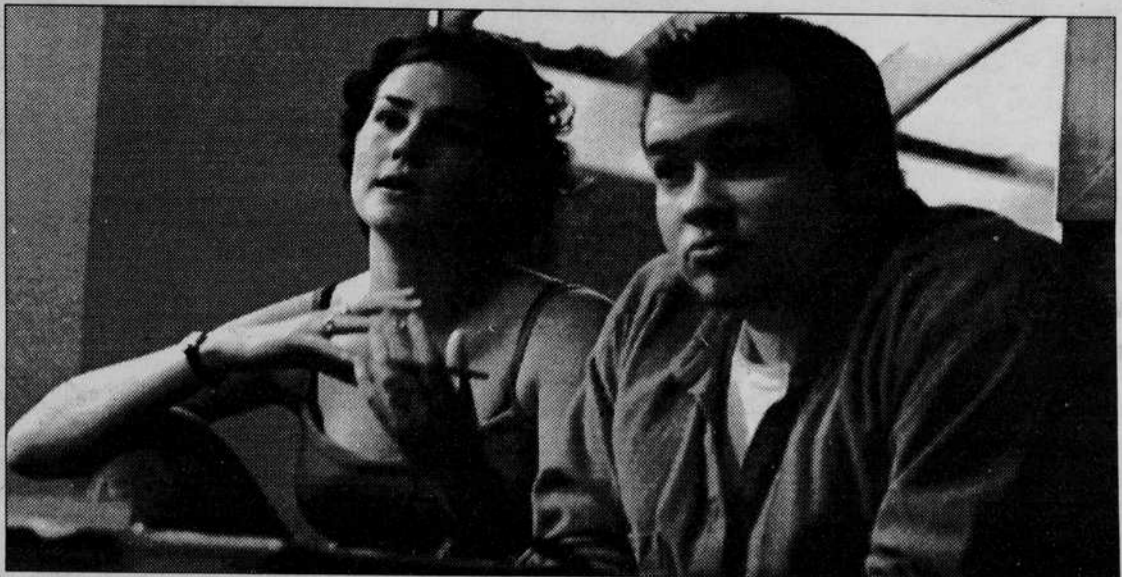
Jim Trubia  
University  
fire protection manager

petitions and letter-writing campaigns to University administration. The students plan to gather more information on the problems with the facilities to make the University aware of their frustrations.

ASUO Vice President Mitra Anoushiravani said that while letter writing is effective, so is stopping by and talking to administration.

“Frohnmayr is an excellent president in his fund raising ability. He can find money anywhere,” she said.

Hanscum also said hazards in Villard Hall currently include set pieces lined up in hallways and a movable sound booth during performances that blocks an emergency exit. The theater students refer to the clanking ventilation system in the pipes as a ghost



Sophomore Windy Borman, a journalism and theater major, (left) speaks about the poor conditions of Robinson Theatre.

named “Bob” that poses as a distraction during classes and performances.

Jacobs said performers are not content with the acoustics in performance areas or the lack of enough seating for shows. She said that without up-to-date technology it is difficult to create an exciting show.

Theater arts professor Sandy Bonds had complaints with the costume shop in Villard Hall. She said there is no natural lighting and no ability to dye costumes and paint scenery and props because of the lack of proper ventilation for chemicals. Bonds said the building was not designed as a theater building.

“My biggest concern is health and safety,” she said.

Jim Trubia, the fire protection

manager at the University, said after a second inspection of the building that the issues he addressed with the buildings unsafe standards have for the most part already been fixed.

“It is not an unsafe place, but it has inherent problems due to its age,” he said.

Trubia said the buildings on campus have been kept up through the City of Eugene Fire Department. He said the codes are a rigid system that must be upheld.

“Overall, besides the small problems, I wasn’t shocked,” he said.

However, Rose said she feels the students deserve better.

David George, a freshman and theater major is the master electri-

cian for an upcoming production called “Nicholas Nickleby.” George came from working in high school and community theaters that had better equipment with better systems. He plans to eventually become a lighting designer. Because of this pursuit, he said it is hard for him to learn and advance in professional and technical theater with equipment that would be considered sub-standard in any professional theater.

Hanscum said the lab, rehearsal and performance spaces in Villard Hall are overused daily. The 148 theater majors are not being trained for when they leave and have to use equipment in the professional world.

“This is our chance now to realize what is going on and to take a stand,” Jacobs said.

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