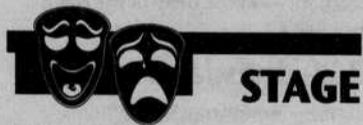


Pocket Playhouse: a well-kept *secret*

■ With only 72 seats, the theater is small, but the creative setting and witty scripts make up for its size



By Mason West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Hiding somewhere within Villard Hall is an entity known as the Pocket Playhouse. Some people have ventured there to behold its mysteries, but to those who have not it lies veiled in secrecy. Well, no more!

The Pocket Playhouse is a 100 percent student-run theater. It hosts as many as eight shows each term, which usually run Thursdays through Saturdays beginning at 5 p.m.

The mission statement of the Pocket is to provide an arena for students to get involved in all aspects of theater, regardless of prior experience. This means that anybody at the University can be involved in the Pocket, as long as they have paid their incidental fees. The Pocket presents a unique opportunity to University students.

"It's a very rare operation to have a student-run theater on campus," said Pocket board co-chair Rowan Morrison.

Perhaps even rarer is the fact that Pocket shows cost only \$1 to enjoy. There is a suggested donation of a buck at the door, which is humorously tossed into a bedpan. This makes the Pocket not only a performing venue for theater students, but a financially feasible option for arts lovers.

John Sharpy, a Pocket board re-

porter/web coordinator, said jokingly, "It's the best theater in town..."

"...for a buck," finished Bruce Ramseyer, Pocket board director's liaison. The Pocket was started in 1991 after the theater program became its own department. Before that, the theater program was combined with the speech program at the University.

One might ask, why call it the Pocket?

The name comes from the theater's small size, Sharpy said.

"It's about the size of a pocket," he said. "And it's all dark and linty," added Holly Johnson, Pocket board faculty liaison.

Though they were joking about the lint, the Pocket is fairly small, with only 72 seats. But hey, size doesn't matter. Also, people going to the Pocket should not expect elaborate sets or complex pyrotechnics.

While there is a \$75 stipend to cover expenses, many items, from props to costumes to technical equipment, are borrowed from the Pocket's own supply or the University theater department.

The Pocket is funded entirely by the ASUO and money raised from fundraising activities organized by the Pocket board.

Despite its size and financial limitations, the Pocket is still a credible theater.

"We do everything a normal theater company would except plan a season, because of the lottery," said Pocket board co-chair Rhaetia Hanscun.

The "lottery" is the method which the students use to choose the plays that will run and the order they will run in. Students who wish to direct a show submit a proposal sheet along with a



Tanya Finley and Conner Dudley perform during last week's Pocket show "The Nature and Purpose of the Universe." Kevin Calame Emerald

"Platypus"

This week's Pocket performance will run at 5 p. m. today through Saturday.

"Platypus" is a show about five actors who are struggling with the conflict between their urge to reject the script they are performing and the need to maintain their role as actors while performing on stage. A critique of post-modern theater, "Platypus" shows the audience every scriptwriter and director's worst nightmare.

Written and directed by Erik Grove. Starring Erik Grove, Steve Haskell, Phil Meyer, Micah Klatt and Valerie Crosby.

copy of the script they would like to produce by a certain due date determined each term.

The due date for submissions for the fall term 2000 season is May 16. Proposals can be picked up in the Green Room or at the web site, <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~pocket>.

All submissions will be put in a lottery to make the selections. The Pocket board does not judge scripts based on content, only on time constraints and the physical plausibility of making the show

work in the space available.

Pocket shows are not limited to published shows. Many students write the scripts that are performed.

This creates an opportunity for aspiring writers as well as student actors and directors to gain experience. Last term, six of the eight shows were authored by students. This term, four of the eight scripts were student-written.

Every term the theater hosts four to eight shows, depending on how many feasible script

submissions are received by the board. The board is the group of 12 individuals behind the scenes that make everything in the Pocket work. They get the rights for shows, make posters, help with sets, etc.

But aside from that, the board is also responsible for other events in the community such as the Shakespeare's birthday celebration on May 1 and the "Shankies" awards held June 4.

"We really try our best to represent theater students as a whole," said Ramseyer.

Nominations for next year's Pocket board elections are due May 2. Voting is open to all students and takes place in the Green Room of Villard Hall on May 5.

The room on the bottom floor, is a little hard to find, but anyone in the building can point you to it. It's where auditions and play promotions as well as other information will be posted.

Dork: Is this raver girl I slept with playing me?

Hey Harlan,

I met this girl at a rave a while back and we had sex. Since then it has gone from a strictly physical relationship to pretty serious. She told me she was initially playing me, but since she has made a connection with me she isn't comfortable about me seeing other girls.

I told her I was cool with that, but if she was getting extra play, I wanted to be able to have the same privilege. Well, I get back from a concert and she doesn't call me. It takes three days to get a hold of her. We hook up and she tells me about how awesome her last rave was and how many drugs she did and about all the cool guys she met.

This has kind of put me in a dilemma because I don't want to be a whiner and sound all jealous because I actually like her. Am I the one now being played?

—Dork

Dear Dork,

You're being played like an or-

gan at a hockey game during a shoot-out.

If she had sex with you at some rave she's probably going to have sex with some other guy at some other rave. There is virtually no trust with this relationship. She gets wasted, doesn't call you, and then tells you she's rooming with some other guys or something like that. Whatever!

You need to talk to her without whining. If she cares about you she'll tell you what's going through her mind. But really

man, if you're looking for a girl you can trust, having sex with her wasted after some rave is a terrible way to start.

Dear Harlan,

I am a 19-year-old female college student who is dating a 20-year-old male college student. Our relationship is great, but here's the catch: we met each other over the Internet.

We talked for over a year before we got the nerve to meet each other. I met his parents this past winter and they seem to like me.

Now, it is his turn to meet my folks. I haven't told my parents much about my relationship as of yet because I'm afraid they'll totally freak.

How do I convince them he's not some Internet psycho?

—Lost in Cyberspace

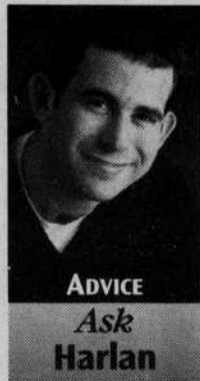
Dear Lost,

While some people pretend to be things they are not online, there are a lot of good people with good intentions. If you don't think your parents can handle the truth you can always be vague. As far as

they're concerned, you met him through a friend. No one needs to know that you met him online. If he's so wonderful they'll see it for themselves.

The most important thing is that you're safe and happy. Any loving parent only wants that. How you find your happiness is your business.

"Ask Harlan" is a syndicated column. Harlan is not a licensed psychologist, therapist or physician, but he is a licensed driver. You can write to Harlan at www.helpmeharlan.com.



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