

Features Editor:
Lisa Toth
lisatoth@dailyemerald.com

Dressed for victory
Check out the winners of this year's
Pulse Costume Contest. **PAGE 7**

Thursday, November 1, 2001

Must-see play deals well with tough subject

■ 'Keely and Du,' playing today and Saturday at the Pocket Playhouse, is 'exciting theater' and a must-see



PLAY REVIEW

Jane Martin 'Keely and Du'

Pocket Playhouse

★★★★☆

By Mason West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Theater is at its most powerful when it touches on universal issues in human experience. Many plays deal with timeless themes such as love, but plays can be most successful when they combine these themes with current events.

Though first performed in 1993, "Keely and Du" written by Jane Martin, centers around the still-timely topic of abortion but ends up making a statement about human relationships.

The play, directed by Keely C. Helmick (name similarity is purely coincidental) and opening in the Pocket Playhouse today, begins with an unconscious woman, Keely, being wheeled into a room and handcuffed to a bed by masked individuals. One woman, Du, remains behind to care for Keely. As the play unfolds, the audience learns that Keely was raped by her husband and a child was conceived. While going to the abortion clinic, Keely was kidnapped by religious zealots, who call themselves "operation retrieval," with the intention of keeping her in custody until she has the baby.

Keely, as one might expect, doesn't take this news very well. The scene where she wakes up to find herself imprisoned is heartbreaking. Nicole Barrett plays the part of Keely with hatred toward her captors but with enough humanity to form a necessary relationship with Du, played by Annie Branson.

From the start, Branson portrays Du as a woman who believes in what she is doing but maintains her humanity. Before Keely arrives in the room, Du struggles with having her mask on or off; it is a beautifully subtle gesture on Branson's part. It is clear that while Du cares about the unborn child, she cares about Keely as an individual.

Du's counterpart, Walter, blatantly states he would choose the child over Keely. "I can love you," he says, "but I must protect the child."

As the ringleader of operation retrieval, Walter makes frequent visits to check on Keely and spout his pro-life rhetoric. Alexander Pawlowski plays the part with a cold, analytical surface that occasionally cracks to reveal an insane conviction. Walter justifies his actions by asserting that Keely is not in a position to make responsible decisions, so he must make them for her. Every time Keely lashes out at him, he considers his view to be confirmed.

Turn to 'Keely and Du,' page 8



Adam Jones Emerald

Kim Bates (behind) and Rick Brown perform a scene from 'Angels in America,' the second part of 'Perestroika,' which opens Nov. 2. at the Robinson Theatre.

AMERICAN EPIC COMES TO ROBINSON

■ The three-hour tale speaks to politics, religion, sexuality, disease and relationships

By Lisa Toth
Oregon Daily Emerald

Since the mid-1980s, "perestroika" has been one of the most popular Russian words to enter English-speaking culture.

The word literally means "the act of rebuilding," according to russianminds.com, and is used to identify the period from 1980 to 1981, characterized by the comprehensive political reforms introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev. The term also relates to the period in the mid-1980s when the AIDS crisis exploded and was used as the title of a play set in that era.

"Angels in America — Part Two: Perestroika," the second half of the Tony award-winning play written by Tony Kushner, begins Nov. 2 on the main stage at Robinson Theatre and kicks off the 2001-2002 University Theatre season.

Performances of last spring's "Part One: Millennium Approaches" have also been scheduled for those who missed the first half or want to see it again.

Director John Schmor, also an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre Arts, said the play is centered around eight different plot lines, but because it is so "beautifully balanced," the audience won't be confused.

Kushner tells the story in two parts of a group of New Yorkers trying to make sense of the world that is falling apart around them. They face both political and personal crisis during the early years of the AIDS epidemic.

"There is so much to it," Schmor said. "The play speaks on a lot of different levels to a lot of different people."

Schmor said he chose the play because it blends "fantasia and realism" and added that it is both entertaining and provocative.

"Doing Part One last spring was hard enough — Part Two is more wildly complicated — funnier,

What: "Angels in America — Part Two: Perestroika" by Tony Kushner
When: 8 p.m. — Nov. 2, 3, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17

2 p.m. — Nov. 11 (proceeds will go to disaster relief efforts in New York City)

What: "Angels in America — Part One: Millennium Approaches" by Tony Kushner

When: 8 p.m. — Nov. 8

2 p.m. — Nov. 10, 17

Where: Robinson Theatre, Villard Hall, 1109 Old Campus Lane. Free parking is available in the University lot at E. 11th Avenue and Kincaid Street.

Tickets: Available at the EMU Ticket Office, 346-4363; the Hult Center, 682-5000; and the University Theatre Box Office, 346-4191, only on days of performances.

General public, \$12

Seniors, faculty/staff, non-University students, \$9

University students, \$5

Warning: The verbal content and visual imagery of this production may offend some adults and is not appropriate for children.

Source: University Theatre

sexier, visually more magical and surprising," Schmor said.

Prior, played by Matthew Woodburn, is a man living with AIDS whose lover, Louis, played by Nate Bloch, has left him to become involved with Joe. Joe, who is played by Rick Brown, is an ex-Mormon and political conservative whose wife, Harper, played by Kim Bates, is slowly having a

nervous breakdown.

"(Perestroika) especially follows Prior's journey and what he discovers about the blessings of change," Schmor said.

Schmor said some of the script's strange references to New York City may cause the audience to think about the events of Sept. 11, which the cast had not expect-

Turn to 'Perestroika,' page 8

Strangefolk to perform at WOW Hall Thursday

■ The Vermont-based jam rock/folk band comes to Eugene with a new sound

By Jen West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Strangefolk's fall tour is finally headed for Eugene with new members and a new sound. This tour comes right on the heels of their recently released album, "Open Road," their first album with the new configuration.

Their performance at WOW Hall on Thursday will include songs from the new CD as well as songs from their previous albums and a few covers.

However, this Vermont-based jam rock/folk

band is not the same band that performed at WOW Hall in 1998. In the fall of 2000, they lost their lead singer/guitarist, Reid Genauer to graduate school at Cornell University and took on two new members, singer/guitarist Luke "Patchen" Montgomery and keyboardist Scott Shdeed.

"Strange Folk" (originally two words) began in 1991 as an acoustic duo with Genauer and Jon Trafton, according to the band's Web site at www.strangefolk.com. But within a year, they added bassist Erik Glockler and drummer Luke Smith and condensed the band's name to one word.

They first played in bars in and around Burlington, Vt., and gradually built a national

fan base with the releases of their three studio CDs: "Lore," "Weightless in Water" and "A Great Long While."

Now they tour the nation playing 150 to 200 gigs a year at a variety of venues, said Russ Weis, manager of the Vermont office.

Montgomery admitted it is difficult maintain such a rigorous schedule, often playing five nights a week in five different cities.

"We try to keep it as interesting as possible and not be repetitive," he said.

Montgomery said he remembered crossing paths with Strangefolk in New York City in the mid-1990s. But at the time, he was playing with the band Folkstone. In late 2000, he per-

Turn to 'Strangefolk,' page 7