

'Trial of Loki' delves into Norse mythology, ethos

The play, 'The Trial of Loki,' introduces Norse mythology and allows audience members to serve as judge and jury

Aaron Shakra
Pulse Reporter

"The Trial of Loki" will commence tonight at the McDonald Theatre.

The play, an all-original production directed by Kyle Schweighauser, features mythological Norse gods and goddesses and, as the title implies, revolves around the trial of Loki, the trickster god. According to Norse mythology, Loki was supposedly influenced by another god, Hodur, to slay Baldur with mistletoe.

"We've just been rehearsing and rehearsing," goddess Hel actress Wendy Weller said.

Weller said the purpose of the play is to let people know what Norse mythology is about and what is commonly misconstrued. She also referred to Paganism, saying the play tries to make people look at each other and religions of the world differently.

"We all need to come together and work together to make the world better," she said.

Weller came from a Christian background and became a Pagan a few years ago. She said that a Christian path "didn't really feel right."

Everyone in the 20-person production chose his or her character and wrote their own dialogue.

"I took the longest to choose my part; I'm very picky," actress Vicky Ledbetter said. Ledbetter will be playing the role of Mistletoe.

Ledbetter, Weller's daughter, has acted in numerous productions and became a Pagan before her mother.

"I kinda got her into it," she said.

The "interactive" aspect of the show will come toward its end, when the audience will get to play judge and jury for Loki's fate, using pennies placed on either end of a six-foot tall scale.

Music will be prolific during the production. The Sugar Beets will perform between scenes, and Bindaas, Don and Lorraine Voss, Eleven Eyes and African-drumming group Waaw Kuumba will also contribute their talents. A performance by fire-dancing troupe Inflammable Divas was also planned, but was canceled in consideration of Thursday's nightclub fire in West Warwick, R.I.

Senior Edith Sumaqual said the theme of her dance, "In the Family," was inspired by a Filipino folk dance called "Pandango Sa Ilaw." The dancers in "In the Family" balance real lit candles on their hands as they move.

"It's about grace and it's about balance," Sumaqual said.

She added that she is a first-generation Filipino-American and wants to bring attention to Filipino folk dance, which Americans don't often see. Sumaqual said she also set out to fuse her cultural traditions with her own personality. This resulted in the traditional folk dance incorporated with hip-hop dance and modern music.

"I wanted to put in what my personality is now," she said. "This is a big accumulation of everything good I feel I am at this point."

Anderson said the concert showcases a myriad of personalities and dance styles.

"I just think this is a really good concert for people to come to because it's really diverse," she said. "It represents a tiny piece of the dance world."

Anderson added that the concert is a once a year opportunity for audience members to view a show produced entirely by students.

"That aspect alone makes me happy for people to come and see it," she said.

Tickets will be available at the door. The cost is \$5 for students and senior citizens, \$10 general admission.

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Former mayoral candidate Michael Glowina will play the role of Loki. He said the god character is especially poignant in relation to present day turmoil.

"Having this role in this time of the world is a gift," Glowina said. "It seems to me that Loki's story is fitting for the current world events we're immersed in right now."

Glowina, who also wrote the theme song for the production, referenced chaos theory, and said Loki is a god of chaos, fire and change.

"Things are breaking down right now, and I think it's because we haven't embraced chaos."

Glowina denied claims that the Loki character is a murderer.

"Murderer? Loki's not a murderer. He's just in the center of events. He's like a focal point," he said.

Glowina said that the biggest change that will result from the production is that all proceeds will benefit FOOD For Lane County.

"Food banks are at an all-time low," he said. "All of our money is going to feed hungry people."

Tickets are \$10 at the door or at any Fastixx outlet. The show begins at 7 p.m.

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Dance

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different," she said. "That really shapes not only the piece but the whole experience. The process is really important."

Anderson added that the tone of "Incarnation" differs from other dances she has performed in.

"This piece is very personal," she said. "It's not like other pieces I've been in where it's about projecting to the audience. We're focused on each other; the energy is more internal."

Energy abounds in senior Ruriko Aoyama's theatrical dance, "Plunge Mania." The choreography incorporates props such as plungers and a couch.

Senior Marco Davis will perform in both "Plunge Mania" and Emily Ross' "(sometimes I have a hard time) Standing Still," a lively, post-modern performance. Davis said he enjoyed both pieces' extensive experimentation.

"I really liked the improv aspects of both of them," he said. "It was fun because we just played around with a lot of different movement."



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