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Oregon Daily Emerald

Summer 2003 GER 223 Germany: A Multicultural Society

4 credits
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 June 23rd - July 18th,
 Saskia Buitz

Satisfies Arts & Letters and Multicultural IB Requirement.

GER 223 examines complexities of the increasingly multi-ethnic German Society through the writings of African, Turkish, and Jewish Germans as well as contemporary films on the topic. This course introduces students to the political and social challenges faced by post-unification Germany. We will consider socioeconomic, political, and cultural issues of minority populations. As we study the various groups we will investigate the ways in which they have helped to redefine what counts as "German" today.

Originality, hilarity dominate in 1000th theater production

'This Ship of Fools,' currently showing at the Robinson Theatre through June 7, showcases 'new vaudeville'

Theater review

Aaron Shakra
 Pulse Reporter

This review begins with a command: Go see "This Ship of Fools," playing at the Robinson Theatre. The 1000th University Theatre production is absolutely, stunningly unique — and downright original throughout. Think surreal and think "Moulin Rouge!" with depth and content.

Dubbed on the playbill as "a new vaudeville," the production was devised entirely by University students and faculty. Planning for the play began as early as spring of last year, with director John Schmor se-

lecting Sebastian Brant's "The Ship of Fools" to base the production on. The text, published in 1494, can be read as a treatise of idiocy and mischief, among others.

The result is insanity of the highest order. "This Ship of Fools" is constructed like a house of cards: It sets rules for itself, then goes about systematically breaking them. These rules include: no ukuleles, no socialist folk songs and so on. The ending is so beautifully hilarious that giving anything away would deprive a theatergoer of the play's charm.

If there seems to be a lack of plot description here, it's because there isn't one. This sounds somewhat non sequitur, and an indiscriminate audience member might digest the play in this manner. However, there are certainly themes running through "This Ship of Fools": Gluttony, desire and the futility of human endeavor. If one word could describe all this, it would be absurdity — in all its glory.

The costumes and characters are raging and gaudy; the colors and set design are wonderfully vivid. Every aspect of the production oozes thick, slick color. The stage is set with two booths, diametrically opposed to each other. One reads "Truth" and is held up by pillars of cameras. The other says "Text" and is held by pillars of books.

The scenes of the two-act, nearly 120-minute production unfold

much like vignettes — little pieces, thematically linked. The opening piece was performed by an academic-type character, reading a story from a book, imbuing words with alternate meanings. "Library" becomes libido, "comprehend" becomes decay, "middle," becomes vagina.

Even without a grasp of the admittedly loose themes, flamboyant hilarity reigns in "This Ship of Fools." It contains a smattering of music and dance numbers. Two include "Courting Misfortune," and "Ocean Fool," a number early in the second act, including lyrics aimed at the central tenants of human beings: "With no sense of regret, we sleep to forget." Numerous characters are also musicians — horns, bass, drum, guitar and piano all make appearances during the show.

"This Ship of Fools" is highly, highly recommended, and fleeting — it may never be replicated again. Only three productions remain, on June 5, 6 and 7, all beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$12 for the general public, \$9 for senior citizens and University faculty and \$5 for University students, available at the EMU Ticket Office, the Hult Center for the Performing Arts or the Robinson Theatre box office during performance evenings.

Contact the Pulse reporter at aaronshakra@dailyemerald.com.

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Spots

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with "wow." After a few hours on the trail, you might be using the words interchangeably. The 15.5-mile converted railroad bed begins in Cottage Grove at Mosby Creek Road and takes the cyclist on a getaway along the river, past covered bridges, below skyscraper trees, beside open prairies and up to Dorena Lake. The path is paved but forbids the use of cars. And if the 15 miles leaves you feeling ambitious, the Row is a precursor to the 75-mile whopper over Sharps Creek and Big River Roads.

Best place to risk your body for recreation: Knickerbocker Footbridge

Most people use bridges to cross rivers, but regulars to the bridge-jumping hot spot realize this place is really the poor person's high-dive. This bridge overlooking the McKenzie River — one of five reserved for bikers and pedestrians in Eugene — is the eastern-most part of the Willamette River Greenway's 11-mile trail system leading up to Pre's Trail near Alton Baker Park and Autzen Stadium. Bombs away, baby.

Best place to study or procrastinate: Alton Baker Park

My personal favorite place to head with a pile of books, and then leave them untouched in the grass, is Alton Baker Park. This destination has many distractions for textbook-weary students. The 3- to 4-mile park parallels the Willamette River east and west of the Ferry Street Bridge. Beautiful rose gardens lie at the west end, and jogging and bike paths lead you east. Beside the bridge, you can feed the ducks or meander through the open grass areas filled with all walks of fellow procrasti-

nators playing Frisbee, tanning or smooching on blankets. Picnic areas, rest rooms, playgrounds and the Cuthbert Amphitheater also call Alton Baker home. The park's east end leads up to an extensive trail system.

Best place to take a dip:

North Fork of Middle Fork of the Willamette River or Amazon Pool

Popular swimming holes riddle an 11-mile stretch off Forest Road 19 (North Fork Road). The lower 7 to 8 miles of the river, which is packed with bodies in the summer, is the most popular section. For a less-crowded area, turn off into a gravel turnout about 1.4 miles into Forest Road. To reach the stretch, head out on Highway 58, east to the second Westfir turnout and turn left. Continue three miles to the Westfir Covered Bridge. After the bridge is Forest Road 19.

For chlorine lovers, Amazon Pool, Eugene's only public outdoor pool, opens today for lap swimming at designated times. Recreation hours begin June 16. The whole family can cool off in Amazon Park, located at 26th Avenue and Hilyard Street.

Best place to soak your muscles:

Terwilliger Hot Springs (Cougar Hot Springs)

Repeat this summer mantra: River by day, hot springs by night. The springs feature stonework around each of the six pools, an impressive rock carving and a covered structure to hang clothes. The area is officially closed at night (wink, wink). To reach the springs, turn south from Highway 126 onto Forest Road 19 and follow the signs.

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