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Music and Dance

UO School of Music & Department of Dance

FEBRUARY CONCERTS

For more information on School of Music events, call 346-5678, or call Guardline at 485-2000, ext. 2533 for a taped message.

Thur. 2/5 JULLIARD STRING QUARTET

Chamber Music Series 8 p.m., Beall Hall
Music by Haydn, Webern, and Beethoven. Limited
\$5 student rush tickets; reserved seats \$15, \$28, \$32,
at the Hult Center (682-5000) or EMU (346-4363)

Fri. 2/6 THE JAZZ CAFÉ

UO Jazz Combos 8 p.m., 178 Music
\$5 General Admission, \$3 students & senior citizens

Sun. 2/8 THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

UO Ensemble 3 p.m., Beall Hall
Symphonic ballet music by Copland, Milhaud, Gershwin.
\$5 General Admission, \$3 students & senior citizens

Thur. 2/12 POETRY IN SONG

French Art Songs sung by UO voice majors.
7:30 p.m., Beall Hall FREE Admission

2/12-2/14 WINTER STUDENT DANCE CONCERT: "Dance Infusion"

Department of Dance 8 p.m., Dougherty Dance Theatre
\$10 General Admission, \$5 students & senior citizens

Wed. 2/18 "A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC"

UO Opera Ensemble & University Symphony
Stephen Sondheim's acclaimed musical in a fully-staged
production. 7:30 p.m., Soreng Theatre
Reserved seats \$20, \$18, \$10 at Hult Center: 682-5000

Fri. 2/20 THE JAZZ CAFÉ

UO Jazz Combos 8 p.m., 178 Music
\$5 General Admission, \$3 students & senior citizens

Sat. 2/21 "A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC"

UO Opera Ensemble & University Symphony
7:30 p.m., Jacoby Auditorium, Roseburg
Gen. Admission \$10 Call Ticketwest: 1-800-992-8499

Sun. 2/22 "A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC"

UO Opera Ensemble & University Symphony
7:30 p.m., Soreng Theatre
Reserved seats \$20, \$18, \$10 at Hult Center: 682-5000

Sun. 2/22 OREGON WIND ENSEMBLE

UO Ensemble 7 p.m., Beall Hall
\$5 General Admission, \$3 students & seniors



For our complete calendar, check: music.uoregon.edu

'Thread' merges old-world tale with new-world topics

University Theatre's latest play, 'A Thread in the Dark,' showcases talented actors and a politically savvy story

By Andrew Shipley
Freelance Reporter

Take feminism, existentialism, some unnervingly timely socio-political commentary and a bit of anarchy, put them all in a blender with a base of Greek mythology, then hit puree.

THEATRE REVIEW

Quite a mess, right? Not necessarily. These were just some of the ingredients in University Theatre's latest concoction, Hella Haasse's play "A Thread in the Dark." The result is a surprisingly accessible and entertaining production.

The Dutch play — a feminist revisitation of the famous Greek myth concerning Theseus and the Minotaur — was first performed in Holland more than 30 years ago. For those whose knowledge of Achaean mythology is a bit rusty, Theseus (played by Eli Levine), the prince of Athens, is sent to the island of Crete as a prisoner of war. On the island, Minos, the King of Crete (played by Jon Sharpy), has an inescapable labyrinth — constructed to house the Cretean god Minotaur — into which prisoners of war are thrown as sacrifices. Theseus is said to have slain the Minotaur and escaped the labyrinth with the help of King Minos' daughter.

Turning the story's original themes of power struggles and masculinity inside out, the play asserts the Minotaur never existed and instead postulates that it was simply a fabrication to augment the power of Crete.

The myth also is also used as a narrative framework to explore issues of political exploitation and power structures through the characters' attitudes and actions toward the Minotaur. Focusing on the struggle of Minos' eldest daughter Ariadne's (played by Erica Smith) attempt to expose her father's invention, "Thread" weaves complicated intellectual themes through Ariadne's escape from Crete and her subsequent relationship with Theseus before twisting into the final, climactic act.

If this plot sounds remote or outdated, consider the statement, "My budget includes the largest increase in defense spending in history."

No, this is not taken from President George W. Bush's State of the Union address, but rather from King Minos' explanation of his personal investment in the illusion of the Minotaur. The king — power-hungry and downright

Machiavellian at times — strikes an uncanny cord in America's current political environment. Don't be thrown by the premise of a feminist revisionist of a Greek myth; the play has plenty to offer even if you're not a classics or women's studies major.

The themes of modern political allegory are clear from the play's beginning, and in large part the parallels to modern day succeed. However, the language is at times heavy-handed. For example, the pronunciation of Cretean "bull-games," and the references to white houses and standards of living are glaringly anachronistic. Still, the play's examination of complex political and moral issues is intelligent.

Though "Thread" is thought-

the leading role. Ariadne's progression from fearful innocence to self-righteous excitement to resentful cynicism is captured in convincing detail by Smith, whose prescience of events shift tangibly in both speech and movement, from stiff to jittery to lethargic, as the play progresses.

The set design also adds to the play's dark atmosphere. Light-colored clothes stream from props and costumes, and black trees are painted in silhouette surrounding the Arena Theatre, creating a sinister contrast. A giant column juts impressively out of the stage's back wall, rounding out a conceptual design which sacrifices realism to more accurately capture the atmosphere of the play. On the whole, "A Thread in the



Lauren Wimer Photographer

(Left to right) Margie Kment, Connie Hymer and Erica Smith act out a scene from "A Thread in the Dark," which opened Wednesday at the Arena Theatre.

provoking, it still contains a sense of humor. This is accomplished particularly in the final acts when the conflict focuses into a lofty examination of the importance of truth. Performances in the first act by Sharpy and Connie Hymer as the Nurse are enthusiastic and breathe fullness into their potentially flat characters.

In the second and third acts, the characters grow more complex, and the talents of the performers begin to dominate the show. Levine is appropriately solid and simple as Theseus, while Margie Kment steals entire scenes as Ariadne's pouty and manipulative sister, Phaedra. At points, the chemistry between Kment and Levine is laugh-out-loud funny, providing a welcome escape from otherwise dour characters.

Most impressive, however, is Smith's treatment of Ariadne in

"Dark" is a creative and challenging production that will inspire sympathy or animosity in any thoughtful audience. For a play that carries no pretenses of escapism or mindless enjoyment, "Thread" manages to be both entertaining and provocative and well worth the investment of a little open-minded curiosity.

The play runs tonight, Friday and Saturday, and next week it runs from Feb. 12 to Valentine's Day. Performances begin 8 p.m. in the University's Arena Theatre, located in 104 Villard Hall. There is no late seating. Tickets are available at the EMU Ticket Office and cost \$4 for University Students, \$5 for University faculty and staff and \$6 for the general public.

Andrew Shipley is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

Dance for a Reason benefits high-demand scholarship fund

More than 100 dancers performed a range of styles at Friday and Saturday shows to raise scholarship money

By Jennifer Sudick
Freelance Editor

It is five minutes to showtime at the 10th-annual Dance for a Reason benefit, and 12-year-old Geffan Pearlson is nervous. An audience of nearly 500 people has packed the Lane Community College Theater, with last-minute attendees pouring into the aisles.

"I love performing," Pearlson said. "Once you're on stage, you are not

nervous anymore — you just perform."

Pearlson, along with her 8-year-old sister Alia Pearlson and members of The Elite Dance Gymnastics Exhibitions performance group, opened sold-out shows on Friday and Saturday nights with a mix of dance tumbling and modern ballet.

More than 100 performers highlighted dance styles, ranging from West African to hip-hop, in an effort to raise money for The EDGE Scholarship Program created by Dance for a Reason producer Geni Morrow. Morrow said there has been an increased demand for dance scholarships in recent years and estimated that this year's performances raised more than \$2,000.

"There's a whole lot of needy people out there," she said, adding that 22 people received scholarship funds this year, and that more than 200 children have benefited from the program in past years.

The event has raised money for organizations, such as the Lane Independent Living Alliance, Community Soup Kitchens and Womenspace. Eugene resident Misti Waddell, who helped sell T-shirts at the event as an additional fund-raising effort, said the community has shown overwhelming support for the program.

"Last year was the first year they did two nights because it was selling out

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