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Pulse

Class play explores Russian version of classic fairy tale

BY AMY LICHTY
SENIOR PULSE REPORTER

Every culture has its traditional fairy tales of love, monsters, good conquering evil and lessons to be learned that get passed on from generation to generation. The timeless fairy tale of "Beauty and the Beast" has long been a part of societies around the world, with origins dating back to the classic story of Cupid and Psyche. These tales differ in their specific details, but the classic theme of love overcoming appearance remains.

At the University, Julia Nemirovskaya, an assistant professor in the Russian and East European Studies Center, has reworked the Russian version of this fairy tale, titled "The Scarlet Flower," originally written by Sergei Aksakov. It will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Friday in Agate Hall.

In her version of "The Scarlet Flower," Nemirovskaya has incorporated many of the traditional Russian fairy tales she was told as a child into a performance that takes place in a Russian Dvoretz (the Czar's palace), where a spoiled and child-like Tsarevich

(prince) is forced, for the sake of the Tsarstvo (state), to marry. He insists that every prospective bride tell him a fairy tale he does not know because he grew up with a loving nanny who told him every Russian fairy tale ever known. After turning down many beautiful brides-to-be, the spoiled prince offends the wrong woman, who turns him into a hideous beast. Soon after, Beauty enters his life. She must spend her days with the beast in exchange for her father's life, who picked a scarlet flower from the beast's garden to bring home to her. As the old fairy tale goes, the prince must learn how to love and be loved, and Beauty is of course the one who teaches him.

The actors in the play aren't theater arts majors; they are students exploring the Russian culture and language in Russian Through Theatre, a class Nemirovskaya teaches throughout the year. Every term she teaches the class, Nemirovskaya writes a different play for her students to perform, inspired both by Russian culture and the class itself.

"After I find out how many students

are in my class, I go home and write the play because then I'll know how many parts I need and what kind of people I know I'll be working with," Nemirovskaya said.

"The Scarlet Flower" will be a bilingual play, mostly in Russian but with an English synopsis throughout. There will also be traditional Russian songs, dances and costumes.

"Through the humor, singing, dancing and the story itself, we're trying to teach people about Russia and their views of beauty, the traditional Russian dress and the way they walk and talk," said Amberle Johnson, who plays the First Bride and serves as assistant director. "Basically, we're just trying to expose people to a different way of life. There's going to be some gypsy dancing and some traditional Russian dances and songs. And it's going to be really funny."

There is no cost to attend the performance, but donations — monetary, props and other needed materials — are welcome.

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OMAS: Policy is against diversity, Hanks says

Continued from page 1

unique learning experiences for students," including the one OMAS coordinates.

"This office provides services to minority students, including the coordination of class registration for a few specific courses, which attempt to create a critical number of minority students in some course sections," the statement reads. "However, these sections are available to all students and any student may take the courses in these sections as long as space is available. Courses

at the University of Oregon have space restrictions designed to balance access and cost with providing individualized educational experiences. We evaluate our student programs on an ongoing basis to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate in a University of Oregon education."

Misley said he filed a complaint because he "felt no group of students should have to go through extraordinary means to register for a class based solely on their skin color."

Hanks said it struck her as "sad" that nobody had filed a complaint with the DOE before she did.

"It really shuts down that idea of diversity because it's not letting a group of people have a voice in a classroom setting just because of their skin color," Hanks said. "If this ends up being a big deal, I will stick by it. I will see it through. ... If they insist on discriminating based on race, I don't see any reason why I shouldn't."

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