

Winnie-the-Pooh can soothe the most blustery day

'The Tao of Pooh' applies the idyllic world of the beloved children's book to easing the bustle of life

BY AMY LICHTY
PULSE EDITOR

Books usually serve one of four purposes: to entertain, to inform, to persuade or to inspire. Rarely does a book fit nicely into all four categories, so when you find one that does, you know it's special. "The Tao of Pooh" is one of those incredibly special books.

Readers are probably asking, "The What of Pooh?" or "The Tao of Who?" Well, let me explain (but not too much, as Taoists would say). Let's start with what most people already know.

Pooh (yes, as in Deep-in-the-Hundred-Acre-Wood-Winnie-the-Pooh) is main character in a classic children's

bedtime story written by A. A. Milne for his son, Christopher Robin. This "Bear of Very Little Brain" appeared in only two books by Milne: "Winnie-the-Pooh" and "House on Pooh Corner," but Pooh quickly became a beloved hero to all who read about him.

The other side of "The Tao of Pooh" is the Tao (pronounced Dao), an ancient Chinese philosophy or religion, however individuals personally would like to apply it. The Tao is so simple that it's difficult to explain. Roughly, "Tao" translates to "Way," which can mean lots of things in English, such as course, method, path, practice or guide. But even

attempting to define the Tao with synonyms complicates it because, simply put, the Tao just is, much like Pooh just is. (Are you getting it?)

Benjamin Hoff, the brilliant author of "The Tao of Pooh," perhaps explains it best in the foreword:

"What is this you're writing?" asked Pooh, climbing onto the writing table.

"The Tao of Pooh," I replied.

"The how of Pooh?" asked Pooh, smudging one of the words I had just written.

"The Tao of Pooh," I replied, poking his paw away with my pencil.

"It seems more like the owl of Pooh,"

said Pooh, rubbing his paw.

"Well, it's not," I replied huffily.

"What's it about?" asked Pooh, leaning forward and smearing another word.

"It's about how to stay happy and calm under all circumstances!" I yelled.

"Have you read it?" asked Pooh.

The "Tao of Pooh" continues on like this, with little conversations here and there between the author and Pooh and the whole gang (Piglet, Rabbit, Eeyore, Owl and, of course, the rascally Tigger).

There are also small passages from Milne's books that illustrate the Taoist principles through the quiet,

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COURTESY

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Jazz: Trio fuses different kinds of music into genre

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Koenigsberg since their younger days together at South Eugene High School. "Elliott Smith has been in the consciousness of Toby and I for the last two years. We'd talked about doing this performance for a long time and the time that we actually end up doing it turned out to be almost the anniversary of his death."

All three of the musicians agreed that the performance will have something to offer University students. Crow, who has been playing bass for about 12 years and has performed with Koenigsberg at Luna once before, said he believes it's valuable for students to see University-based music outside of the campus atmosphere.

"I also think some of the tunes, especially in this show coming up, are going to be pretty cool," he said. "They're more unusual for a jazz group to be playing. I think it's always nice to breathe new life into jazz music, to take the concept of improvisation and everything else that goes into jazz and apply it to more popular music."

Koenigsberg said one of the things he loves most about jazz is the

way almost any type of music can find a home in the genre. This, however, also poses some obstacles in performance settings.

"In popular music, there's usually one recording that is sort of the definitive version of a song," Koenigsberg said. "So, when you're completely changing the medium from, say, vocalist and electric guitar to piano trio, it's obviously going to sound a lot different than that one version everybody knows. I think the challenge is being able to change it to work in the new medium while still retaining the essence of the song."

If done right, Palmer said creative jazz — the type that fuses different kinds of modern music into a jazz format — has the potential to be an art music that people today can really relate to.

Tonight's performance will begin at 6:30 p.m. The cover charge for the performance is \$3. Luna is located at 30 E. Broadway. For more information, check out the Web site at www.luna-jazz.com.

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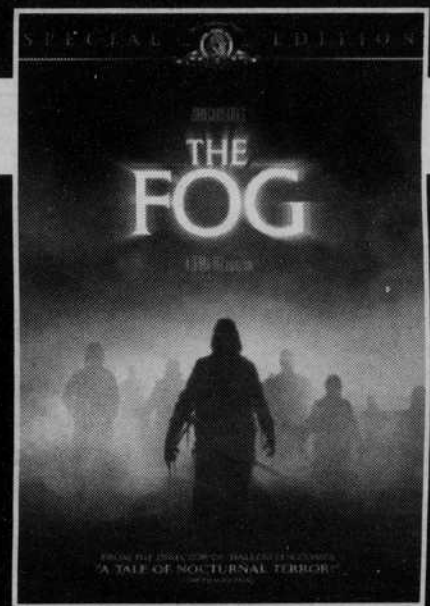
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