

'Vagina Monologues' gives voice to women's stories

■ Play benefits Shelter From the Storm

By Sabrina Thompson
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Eve Ensler premiered her play "The Vagina Monologues" in 1996, and since then the cultural phenomenon has been translated into nearly 50 languages, giving voice to women's stories across the world.

Eastern Oregon University groups are putting on the show twice this weekend: at 7 p.m. Feb. 28 in Hoke Union Building room 339, and again at 7 p.m. Feb. 29 at hq, 112 Depot St., both in La Grande.

Proceeds from the shows will go to Shelter From the Storm, the local safe haven for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse.

"It is really about raising awareness and stopping violence against women and girls," said Beckie Juarez, the production's director, said about the show, which "talks about what it is like to be a woman, and our bodies."

Three student groups came together to present the play: the Student Association for Gender Equality, Mountainqueers and Sexual Health Advocacy Group. But the roles were open to all community members, students, faculty and alumni. The cast is composed of 15 women and non-binary actors performing 17 monologues.

"It is people's experiences that you don't know about and you don't hear about a lot because they are not amplified," EOU student and performer Julia Huyg said of the play. "Amplifying the voices of people who have stories to tell is what we want to do."

'It's really about raising awareness and stopping violence against women and girls.'

- Beckie Juarez, director

The show consists of individual and group monologues that cover topics of consensual and non-consensual sexual experiences, body image, sex work and more. Ensler interviewed more than 200 women to create the monologues.

The play is often performed as part of the V-Day/One Billion Rising effort founded by Ensler to end domestic and sexual violence.

Emily Hastings with Shelter From the Storm has been working as the liaison between the performers and the shelter.

"I think there is a lot of stigma around women's bodies and appreciating your body," Hastings said. "Especially in rural areas, sexual violence (and) domestic violence is not something people have experience talking about. This show gives us a space to talk about it and start a conversation that we can and should have."

Tickets may be purchased at the EOU Bookstore and at the door (only cash and check will be accepted at the door). Admission is \$12, \$6 for students.

Note: This show contains mature themes and language.

'Determined to Rise' celebrates women of the vote

JOSEPH — The Josephy Center for Arts in Culture presents a women's exhibition titled "The Valiant Women of the Vote: Determined to Rise." The exhibit opens Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. and will be on display through April 15.

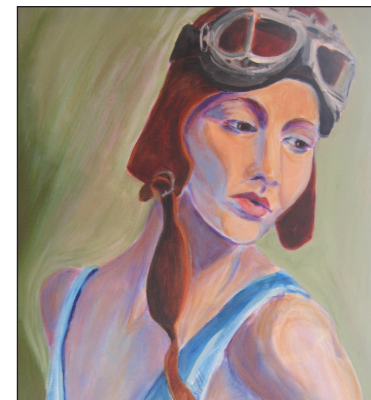
For the past six years, the center has done an open call for women's artwork. This year's curator Jennifer Klimsza looked through 50 artists' artwork and selected 45 pieces that will be on display.

Prizes for Curator's Choice and

People's Choice will be presented at 8:30 p.m. on opening night.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of women winning the right to vote. To help celebrate the suffragette movement, the Josephy Center is adding a special commemorative historical exhibit that the staff and volunteers put together including national, regional and local suffragette history. A special grant from Wallowa County's Soroptomist supported the project.

Many related events will take



"My Ace Pilot" acrylic painting by Jennifer Klimsza

place between Feb. 28 and April 15 in Wallowa County while the exhibit is on display.

To see a schedule of activities, visit www.josephy.org.

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