

PHOTO BY MARY DAVIS

Krambeal and Owsley hold regular events in their barn, which they joke has become "southern Oregon's gay bar"

cant effort simply to be visible as positive role models among both the sexual minorities population as well as the community at large.

"Being out helps people put faces with 'gay' that others may not have seen before," Krambeal says. "As people see that we're not the common stereotype of what they consider gay people to be, I think that helps, and that itself is a proactive activity." □

To learn more about the LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER POLITICAL CAUCUS OF SOUTHERN OREGON, call 541-482-5829 or visit the Internet site www.geocities.com/thecaucus.

neighboring cities such as Medford, Klamath Falls and Grants Pass. For them, the Ashland campus offers a safe refuge where they are free to be themselves.

"When they come to school, they can be who they are and they can be out," Leitner says of some classmates. "As soon as they're driving home, they turn it off, because they have to."

Although SOU's liberal environment provides a relatively safe harbor, conflict occasionally arises on campus, too, and another important focus for the student union is to address homophobia in the residence halls. Leitner hopes members not only will participate in the hiring of a new director of resident assistants but also play a role in staff training.

"It's important to have a presence and let people know we're here," she says. "To let them know who we are and that we shouldn't be discriminated against. To educate." □

For more information about Southern Oregon University's LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, GAY, TRANS AND ALLIES STUDENT UNION and its new Queer Resource Center, call 541-552-8531 or visit the Internet site www.sou.edu/su/lbgta.

If it weren't also the unlikely site of the country's oldest and largest Shakespeare festival, some say Ashland wouldn't be home to many queer folks, either.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival is a magnet for artists who ply their trade on its stages, for tourists who visit the countryside by day and theater by night and for transplants seeking an idyllic spot to settle in where they still can be out.

David Dreyfoos has worked with the festival for six seasons and, as producing director and a gay man, he speaks from experience when he describes the

dual role this venerable institution plays in the sexual minorities community of Ashland.

The festival is one of the largest employers, with more than 400 on the payroll during high season, including 80 actors. It also is one of the community's most significant economic forces, with an estimated \$100 million impact on the surrounding Rogue Valley.

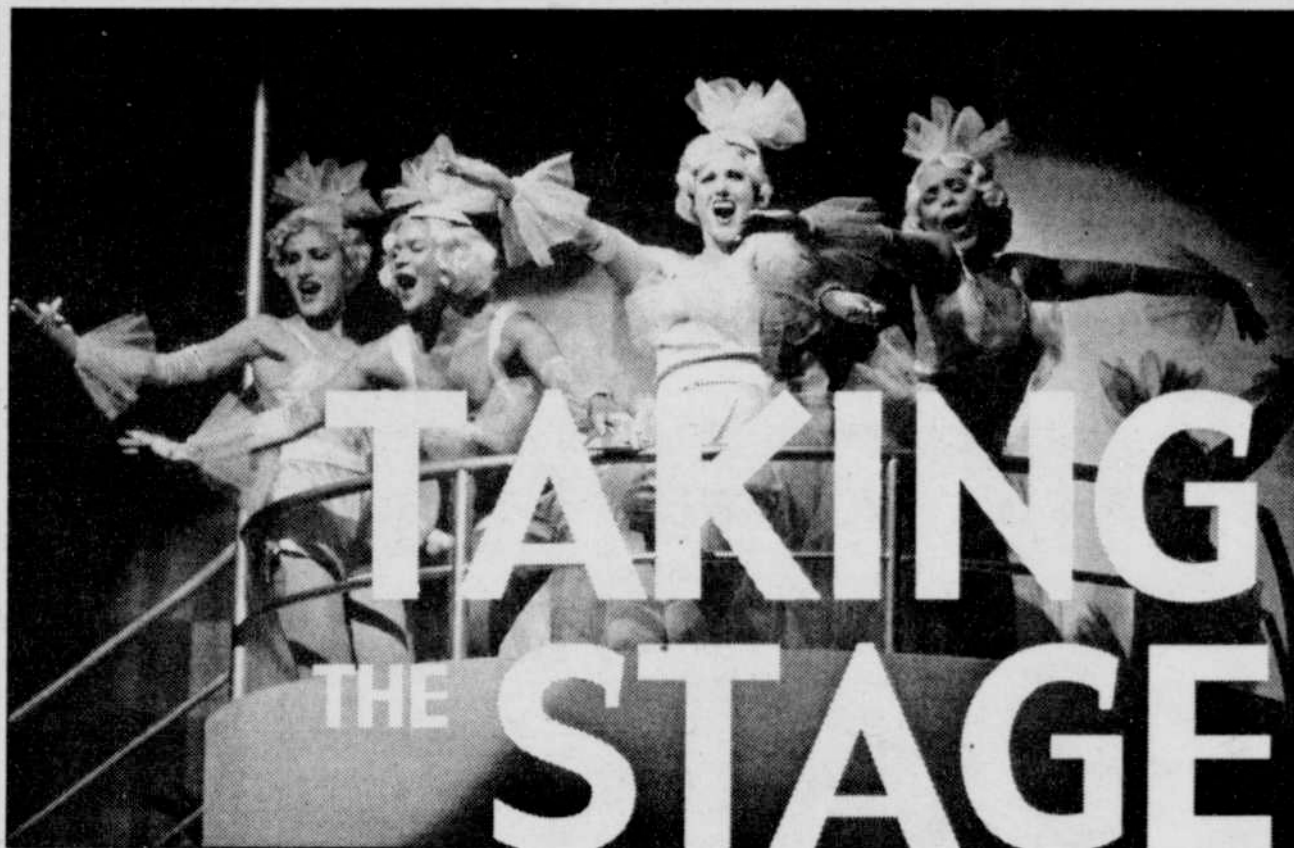
The effect is felt throughout town. Main Street features trendy retailers and restaurants as unusual as their neighboring outdoor Elizabethan stage. And within the city limits, those attracted by the likes of William Shakespeare, Noel Coward and August Wilson lend an air of diversity unknown in other rural towns.

But for as much impact as the festival has



PHOTO BY CHEVENE CUMMING

David Dreyfoos



The Oregon Shakespeare Festival plays an integrated yet isolated role in the Ashland community

on the stage and on the street, it's not often that the twain shall meet. For Dreyfoos and many festival artists, juggling nine shows on four stages invariably leads to tunnel vision focused on work with Ashland's traditional 9-to-5 community.

For example, during the outdoor theater's opening weekend in June, three actors suddenly need to leave town because of deaths in the family. Their absence affects numerous roles across the several shows playing in repertory. Even as critics from around the country arrive in Ashland, Dreyfoos calmly keeps chaos at bay. He arranges understudy rehearsals while simultaneously nurturing the personal needs of a diverse company he knows must have strong relationships in order to work together effectively.

Likewise is true for the theater's complex

NBC's *Frasier*, in a benefit performance of his one-man show *The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me...* Other activities have consisted of a courtyard show, a five-kilometer

run and walk, a silent art auction and an evening performance by company members that concludes with a brief "witnessing" ceremony honoring those who have died of AIDS.

The 2002 Daedalus Project is scheduled for Aug. 19. Although details still were being finalized at press time, festival spokeswoman Amy Richard says this year's program again will include a Green Show and an evening variety show featuring members of the acting company. Also scheduled is an afternoon play reading with Michelle Morain of the first part of Tony Kushner's play *Homebody/Kabul*. □

For more information about OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL and its Daedalus

Project, call 541-428-4331 or visit the Internet site www.osfashland.org.

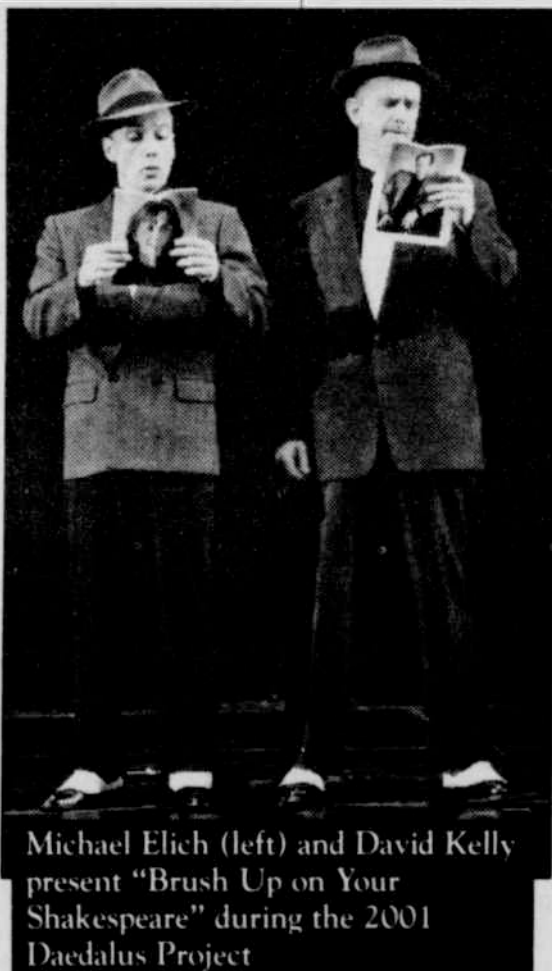


PHOTO BY JENNIFER RELEY

Michael Elich (left) and David Kelly present "Brush Up on Your Shakespeare" during the 2001 Daedalus Project

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