

Williams Toy Theatre: a unique puppet company

By Happie Thacker
Of The Print

For those students who think that puppets are only for young children, the Williams Toy Theatre has a surprise.

The Magic Egg, which will be presented in the Fireside Lounge at noon on Feb. 10, is more than just dancing around, according to Michael Sheafe, the theatre's manager.

"It's a puppet play," Sheafe said. "It has a story and a plot like live theatre with a script and beautiful costumes."

"It's not a baby show -- we do not encourage babies or pre-school children."

The cast of The Magic Egg consists of approximately 10 rod puppets, a doll with a rod extending down from the bottom with all manipulative attachments handled from below, as opposed to marionettes that are manipulated from above.

These puppets are handled by two performers, Robert Williams, founder of the company, and Sandra Delletiglie, an actress who joined the company in 1976.

Williams and Delletiglie do all the voices for the characters as well as handle the live music accompaniments.

"They use no taped material because it turns into television when it's canned," Sheafe said.

The Magic Egg is an international award-winning play in which the fun begins when the grandfather runs off with Baba Yoga the witch, barefoot.

Kikimora, the heroine of the piece, takes him his socks and on the way meets amusing characters from Russian folklore and myth, including the graceful Queen of the Swans and the friendly, but dangerous, Vodnik, guardian of the Magic Egg.

The Play, although derived from ancient myth and folklore, has plenty to say to modern listeners of any age, according to Williams.

"It's sophisticated and refined enough that college students can appreciate the subtleties," Sheafe said.

Puppetry, the most ancient and universal of theatre arts, is enjoying a revival of popularity and the Williams Toy Theatre explores and gives life to the traditions of the art of puppet theatre for modern audiences, Williams said.

Each puppet is a unique creation, sculpted of traditional materials -- wood, papier mache and cloth. They vary in size from one to three feet.

Williams, who came to Portland in 1968, was a member of the American theatre company that performed repertory theatre from its Portland State University base. He became an English professor at PSU and after three years there, resigned to go into puppetry full time.

With his wife, Jennifer, who is now in London, they began the Williams Toy Theatre out of their home in Portland.

The company has since moved to Seattle and has toured extensively throughout the West.

Williams and Delletiglie are planning their first national tour next fall and will undertake their first international tour in the spring of 1979.



Oregon City begins exchange

The Japanese New Year's Day will be the occasion for a tea on the College campus sponsored by the Oregon City-Tateshina Cultural Exchange Committee, Inc.

Oregon City is involved in a cultural exchange program with Japan and Tateshina, a city in Japan, is Oregon City's sister city.

A sister city is a city approximately the same size, economical background, climate and temperance of its other sister.

On Jan. 22 from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge at Clackamas Community College coffee, tea and cookies will be served by women dressed in oriental attire. Entertainment will be supplied by Japanese musicians and dancers

who will be performing traditional songs and dances. Japanese art work will also be on display.

"During the three-day Japanese New Year celebration it is customary for everyone to fast. The women wear all new clothes and have their hair done in different styles. Children go unpunished during the three days because, according to superstition, if one punishes a child during this time they must punish them all year long," said Anona Gaffey, chairperson of the tea.

The public is welcome to come and watch the dancers, listen to the music, and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, Gaffey said.

In Review

Green grass

By Valerie Whittemire
Of The Print

Anyone who has ever read Erma Bombeck will go off on her newest book--any new arrivals will be grateful for having made her acquaintance.

Who's Erma Bombeck? The welcome relief to solemnity on the "Good Morning America" show and often the only worthwhile feature in the daily news of over 140 newspapers nationwide (and

6 overseas), Erma gets us where it counts, again--in the funnybone.

This book is a must for: suburbanites, new drivers proprietors of garage sales, owners of assorted pets...in short, anyone of us who goes through life, half-dazed and saying "Wha' Hoppened?"

If you need a more than ever before" reason to belly-laff, check out Erma Bombeck's "The Grass is Always Greener Over the Septic Tank." She makes life easier.

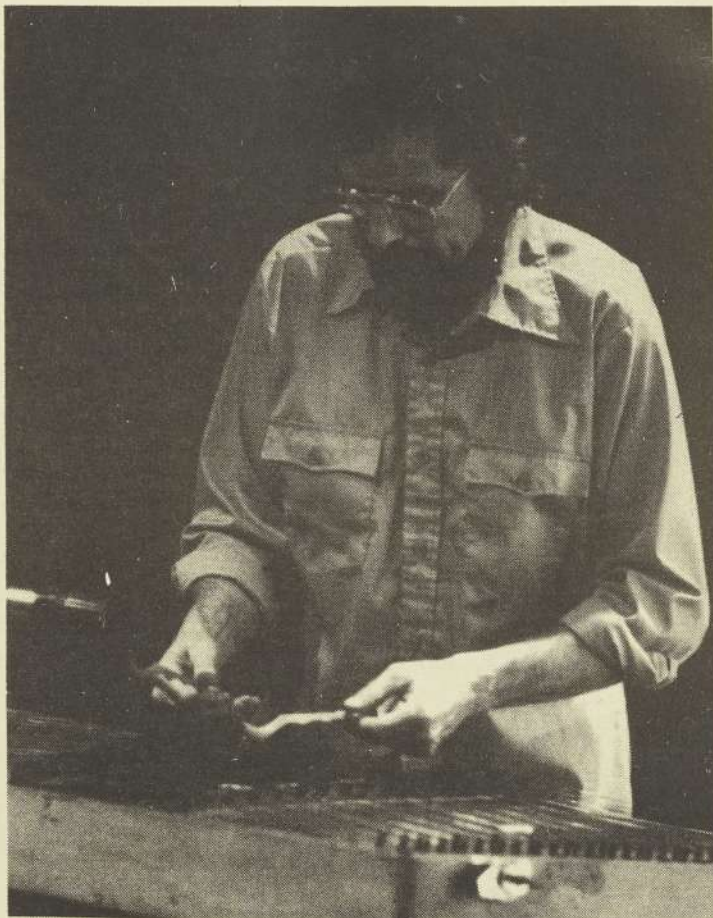


Photo by Brian Snook

Guy Carawan performed at the College Jan. 11 at lunch time. Carawan played a variety of instruments including the dulcimer, banjo, guitar and several flutes. Along with playing contemporary rock music he played Appalachian mountain songs. Besides being a singer he is also an author and folklorist.

Sumus offers workshops

Members of the Sumus Theatre Ensemble will be conducting special workshops in acting during the winter months. The classes will be held in the Lake Oswego Community Theatre and the YWCA Wilson Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Portland.

Acting for High School students will be on Saturdays from 10 a.m. till noon beginning on Jan. 21.

All the Acting I classes will be in the Lake Oswego Community Theatre.

Acting I for adults will be held on Sundays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 22.

Senior Citizens Acting I will be on Wednesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. beginning Jan. 25.

The following classes will be held at the Wilson Center for the Performing Arts:

Scene Workshop from 5 to 7 on Mondays starting Feb. 13.

Technical Theatre--5 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays starting Feb. 14.

Stage Makeup from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays starting Feb. 16.

Beginning Acting on Saturdays from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. starting Feb. 18.

Intermediate Acting will be on Saturdays also. The time will be 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. starting Feb. 18.

All classes will be eight weeks long. For more information call the YWCA at 223-6281.

