

'Duck Soup' wins award

arts

A bachelor's degree in fine arts under his belt, and a national award for an illustration from his "Duck Soup" series in hand, Steve Sandstrom is back at the College, working for the State Department of Education.

Sandstrom was one of 13 national winners in the Mark of Excellence Contest sponsored by the society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. Sandstrom depicted his duck, Mallard Drake, in a scene resulting from the recent protest over the sale of South African coins.

"Duck Soup" originated while Sandstrom attended the

University of Oregon. But it wasn't always the singular, black duck Mallard that colored the pages of the Daily Emerald, the U of O's student newspaper, Sandstrom said it started with little ducks in the corners of the strip. They eventually got bigger and bigger, but they all remained black and white. Soon, the lines the ducks were saying were funnier than the strip itself," Sandstrom said. He knew then that a change was in order.

Sandstrom said he didn't want just any duck, even though Mallard made his character debut with wings. For any normal duck this may not seem to be out of line, but Sandstrom found that the human personification was lost. Basic expression of human features and actions became almost too difficult, he said. He decided to take the wings off and leave Mallard Drake on the ground, Sandstrom said.

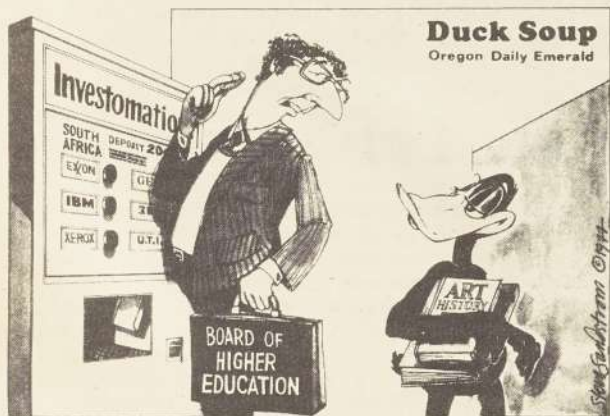
"But why a black duck?" Sandstrom said to himself. First "It's a design device, and it has more psychological impact than a white duck or one of any other color would," he said. Sandstrom added that the duck being black had nothing to do with a racial preference. "A black duck has more bal-



Award winner Steve Sandstrom works on graphic art project. photo by Kelly Laughlin

ance, and stands out better. The white duck is too pristine and too ordinary," he said.

Mallard didn't just have a visual impact during his stay at U. of O. Sandstrom said Mallard had a following -- though not a strong enough following to overcome the traditional popularity of the Oregon Duck (Donald), that decorates tee shirts, watches, and assorted items of the college's faculty and students. When run-off election between Mallard and Donald was held, the vote tallied 1,068 to 590. Not exactly an overwhelming challenge but "Peanuts had a following, so did Doonesbury. I'm kind of glad Mallard Drake had one too," Sandstrom said. Working for the College as a graphic artist by the State Department of Education, Sandstrom said he is involved in the design of "Individual Learning Systems," for the various classes at the College. "These are step-by-step learning packets in such areas as technology, electronics, drafting and forestry," he said.



"Pardon me... would you happen to have change for a Krugerrand?"

'Our Town,' tale of two families

By Kelly Laughlin
Of The Print

Thorton Wilder may have taken a few liberties when he wrote the play "Our Town," and rightly so. He must have done something right to win a Pulitzer Prize for it.

The Playgoers Theatre Guild production of "Our Town," although it couldn't equal the recognition of the 1938 master piece, did a fine job of keeping within Wilder's framework, and turned the ordinary town and people of Grover's Corners into an unordinary feeling possessed by the viewer after assessing it.

The cast, made of the Webb and Gibb families, and assorted members of the small, New Hampshire suburb, remained fortunately subtle, to encourage the main theme of the story to shine through. With a virtually proless stage, the exception of chairs, tables, and a few ladders, the players effectively left nearly everything else to the imagination. The production was organized into three parts: Family Life, Marriage, and Death, and centered around the daily makings of the two families.

On a minor level, the focus of the viewer is turned toward the growing affection of Emily Webb and George Gibb, whose relationship became more im-

portant as the play progressed.

Toward the closing of the first act, they would tie the knot, as does almost every member of Grover's Corners, and planned to share their lives in nearly the same fashion as every other citizen.

Doc Gibbs, George's father, had the normal, whimsical outlook that nearly any father feels toward his "green, 18-year-old kid," getting married. Character Dennis Proulx expressed this concern for his son, George, with power and strong, dramatic control. The wedding "was just lovely," said Joann Mson, a spritly, humorous gal, who portrayed Mrs. Soames. She sat with her back mostly away from the ceremony, informing the audience how much she "loved a good wedding," and how much she "loved to see two people so happy," wiping her tear striden eyes with an already drenched hanky, she brought the crowd into near hysteria.

The pre-matrimony jitters came to both George and Emily, but were soon wiped away by their respective fathers and mothers. David W. Herd III, who played George, summed up the feeling beautifully when he exclaimed, "Only five hours to live." Herd did a splendid job keeping his role

genuinely sincere, concerned, and overly warm toward Emily.

The marriage, however, didn't last. After nine short years, Emily died during childbirth, and joined an "open" cemetery with the wife of Doctor Gibbs (played by a quiet, but lovable Harriet Mason), Mrs. Soames, Simon Stimson, and other-town members. The open graves were another effective element Wilder orientated into his production. He,

in a sense, gave the dead a town of their own. Though deceased, they continued to converse, and took an inward view of the people who visited their gravesites, to grieve and pray.

Julia Machacek, who portrayed Emily Webb, led the rest of the dramatists. She is a sensitive, intense performer, who held much of the play together.

The omniscient voice of

Charles Puckett, who played part of the narrator, town minister and drug store keeper, kept the action of the play on a steady keel, with an amazing professional oration of the town's ordinary, but commonly interesting particularities.

Arms and The Man will be performed by Playgoers Theater Guild, Oct. 20-Nov. 4, in McLoughlin Hall Theater at the College. Season tickets are available.

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