

Recent play lacks timing

By Sandi Langman
Of The Print

Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple," proving that opposites attract, but in odd ways, was presented on the College stage Thursday through Sunday and is scheduled to play Saturday in Corvallis at the Oregon Community College Theater Festival.

Under Jenny Mahali's direction, the comedy initially moved somewhat slowly, due to lack of spontaneity and believability in the minor characters' line deliverage. On the other hand, as promised, the show did provide originality in characterization, and energy from the leading men, J. Dana Haynes and Jim Nicodemus, and the two supporting actresses, Amy DeVour and Verlenda Proulx.

The play centers on two contrasting personalities, the immaculate, frail Felix Ungar (Haynes) and the sloppy, irresponsible Oscar Madison (Nicodemus), who wind up sharing Madison's apartment after Ungar is given the boot by his wife.

In the opening, Madison's poker buddies Roy (F. T. Morris), Murray (Joe Schenk), Speed (Doug Rhodes), and Vinnie (Randy Evans) are slowly working their way through a hand of cards, washing stale sandwiches down with warm beer (Madison's refrigerator has been broken for a couple of weeks), and wondering what

became of their sixth companion, Felix.

After sharing a few minutes of insults and meaningless dialogue, they come to the realization that the always punctual Felix is in trouble. A few more quips and a few phone calls later, they discover Felix has been kicked out of his home and may very well be contemplating suicide.

At the point in which Felix is discovered outside Oscar's door, the play picks up considerably. Haynes' crisp and sometimes silly performance as

the show's straight man consistently battles with the mediocrity found throughout the rest of the production. Haynes definitely provided the enthusiasm normally incorporated into a Simon comedy.

Nicodemus, though he occasionally engaged in overacting, also provided a bright spot and comic sport in this theatrical endeavor.

Gwendolyn and Cicely Pigeon (DeVour and Proulx), portraying Madison's voluptuous British broads, were cute and not subtly suggestive, but were burdened by their English accents and muddled lines.

"The Odd Couple" managed to hang together and draw laughter from the audience, but the truly memorable moments were too few and far between.

The set, obviously constructed on a tight budget, was perfect and the epitome of what any run-down apartment should be. Though appearing somewhat haphazardly thrown together, the set showed thoughtful detailing, down to the water spots on the walls.

An original concept in open set change was utilized, although not to the best advantage.

Mike Clanton and Tina Riggs, to soft music, moved and removed props between

scenes. Their costuming and movements, unfortunately, were too serious and pertained

little to the rest of the show, but still displayed a novel approach characteristic of this production.

Eckists' karma covers campus

By Tracy Teigland
Of The Print

Eckankar is a hard concept to define. It cannot be found in any dictionary and, although the term appears on posters around campus, many people do not know what it means.

Scott Wyland, a student at the College, defines Eckankar as "the path to total awareness, total freedom and total responsibility, or the ancient psyches of soul travel." Wyland refers to Eckankar as "the path you take while in the four lower worlds of matter, time, energy and space."

Wyland began to look into Eckankar about two years ago. He had tried many different religions and cults, ranging from Buddhism to yoga, before he decided to follow the concept of Eckankar.

Wyland said Eckankar has helped him to understand life. It has helped him to overcome his fears as well as improve his moral standards, he said. He no longer feels pressured by the world and the people around him.

Eckankar dictates no set rules or regulations. Followers do not have to perform any rituals as in more orthodox religions. Instead, Eckankar is based on the individual and his personal needs. Rather than attending services, believers practice spiritual exercises individually.

Wyland says he also learned to enjoy life to the fullest without any crutches such as drugs or alcohol, since he has become an Eckist.

However, not all people agree with Wyland's reasoning.

Don Megrath, a leader of intervarsity fellowship here on campus, said that he "doubts from the standpoint of the Scriptures, that Darwin Gross (the Eckankar master or leader) can have any authority." Megrath believes that, "Jesus Christ has authority, because He said He was the Son of God and He proved to be the Son of God through His resurrection from the dead." Megrath also questions Mr. Gross' credibility, he said, "we will wait and see what happens when he dies."

Review

'Heaven's Gate' under-rated

By Thomas A. Rhodes
Of The Print

After years of toils and troubles for director Michael Cimino, producer Joann Carelli, and United Artists, the long awaited "Heaven's Gate" opened at theaters across the nation last month. It opened to bad reviews from nearly every critic, and audiences are staying away in droves or going with the critics' thoughts already planted in their heads, so naturally, the show will be considered bad.

This is a pity, because "Heaven's Gate" is a much under-rated show. It seems that everyone was expecting the film to bomb because of its long production schedule, and its ultra-bad premiere in New York last November. When United Artists opened the epic in New York, it received unanimous pans from the critics (the audience split 50-50) and was dropped after only two days. The four-hour show was sent back to the editing room for reconstruction. Now Cimino and his editors have turned what Vincent Canby of the "New York Times" called "a four-hour, unqualified disaster," into two hours and 18 minutes of tense, spectacular but flawed filmmaking.

The screenplay, written 10 years ago by Michael Cimino, is based on actual events in the Johnson County Wars of the late 19th century. "Heaven's Gate" begins with a brilliant prologue set at the Harvard commencement of 1870. James Averill (Kris Kristofferson) and William Irvine (John

Hurt) receive their diplomas as Joseph Cotton gives a speech concerning the liberal actions the graduates must partake in to improve the world.

Thinking that is his duty, Averill head West. Like everyone else, he and Irvine were drawn by its hope and innocence. Twenty years later, Averill finds himself the Federal Marshall in Johnson County, Wyo. A food shortage has developed and the immigrant settlers are forced to steal and butcher cattle in order to feed their families. The cattlemen lock horns and form the Stock Growers Association to clamp down on the situation.

To solve the problem, the association led by Frank Canton (Sam Waterson), hires a band of mercenaries to shoot and kill the thieves. The mercenaries, headed by Nathan Champion (Christopher Walken), are given a list of 125 people to be shot. Included on the list is the owner of a bordello, Ella Watson (Isabell Huppert). She has been accepting cattle as payment for the house's services (they must have given some service!). Averill and Champion have been 20-year friends and both are in love with Watson. When Averill discovers the list and whose name is on top, their friendship ends abruptly.

Champion is forced to chose between the cattlemen and the opposing forces being raised by Averill with the help of saloon owner John Bridges (Jeff Bridges). The two forces finally meet in a long, bloody battle.

According to some of the

trade papers, some truly bad scenes were cut out, which helped tighten the plot. Unfortunately, there are still many script problems, especially in many of the lines delivered by Kristofferson (he is the worst actor in the bunch and in undoubtedly the weak link in the film). He gives the best performance in his life, but still can't raise his character above a cold macho level. Cimino may be a maniac for detail, but he will allow an actor to maneuver the character where the script isn't designed, which is what Robert DeNiro did in "The Deer Hunter." That is why Cimino should have cast maybe DeNiro or John Voight for the role of Averill. When he speaks lines like, "That's a gob of spit," or, "It seems like there's no one left in this Army with any balls," it sounds silly coming from a man who has graduated from Harvard. A good actor would have convinced Cimino that those lines are terrible.

Despite these flaws, "Heaven's Gate" is still a good film. Technically, it is a wonder to behold. The cinematography by Vilmos Zsigmond is sure to get at least an Academy Award nomination. His camera moves at incredible speeds, and can alternately pan the Wyoming countryside and maintain focus on the characters, a major achievement.

Still, "Heaven's Gate" is tense, tough, long, powerful and surprising. It is vastly vogue to stomp on Cimino these days. View with an open mind.

ABE-GED students learn "Telepoetry"

Aundria, my little one
Morning is sure to come.
Hours late and on the run
Close your eyes and rest for the sun,
fun,
hon,
little one.

—Sherry Dexter
By Tracy Teigland
Of The Print

In this verse about a child, the author is practicing a new style of poetry called "Septones." Like haiku, the ancient Japanese poetry which specifies the number of syllables allowed per line, Septones are based on more modern rules: telephone numbers. Maybe a better name for them would be "telepoems."

The idea is to base the number of syllables on the writer's phone number. Telephone numbers have seven numbers, therefore a septone has seven lines. Each line has the amount of syllables that the number dictates. If the first number is six, there would be six syllables in the first line of the septone.

Bernice Peachy, ABE-GED instructor, recently introduced this method of writing to her novice writers. The idea was "to help them understand what a syllable is, as well as to introduce them to poetry." Peachy said her students "considered the assignment a challenge, and were shocked to find out that they could be, and in fact are, creative."

Peachy introduced Septone writing to her students after reading about the poems in a magazine called "Read," which deals with topics about reading and English.

Septones have been used in English classes all over the U.S. and are proving to be a useful way to get students to learn and enjoy writing poetry, Peachy said.