

★★★ Play review ★★★

'I Do! I Do!' takes overplayed musical trip

By D. Dietrich
Of The Print

Putting future shock aside, the musical adaptation 'I Do! I Do!' is a reassurance that some things don't change. In this case, the good, the bad, and the trivial of marriage in anywhere U.S.A. are harmonized over. Not to say that times haven't changed since the play's turn-of-the-century setting, but that's not the focus of this capsulization of a 50-year marriage.

Based on "The Fourposter" by Jan de Hartog, "I Do! I Do!" has attracted its share of audiences since the 1966 Broadway opening. Portland Civic Theater's production is almost assuredly, if not entirely speculatively, less vibrant than the debut run, but the show is a good solid effort. If not an already acknowledged musical fan, this production is not the one to win you over.

To list the cast as the program does (in order of appearance), Cyndy Ramsey controls the role of She (Agnes) while Bob Lamberson as He (Michael) seems a bit more constricted in his performance. The audience's view of this less-than-unusual couple is the narrow spectrum of moments in the bedroom. Experts do agree, however, that 95 percent of the average marriage occurs in the bedroom.

In the overextended first act, Agnes and

Michael are introduced in a farsical wedding scene as they exchange "I Do! I Do's!" Ramsey's voice and well maintained naive charm befit her untainted character. The wedding night cliches are tidied up by her unperfunctory performance. Michael is of course a more menacing player in the 'she got hers, now he'll get his' scene.

Lamberson is certainly professional in his very volatile character but his vocal style lacks the color and effortless quality of Ramsey's. As their life moves rapidly through duets and lyrical soliloquies in the first 16 years of marriage, two children and a successful career bloom before the real crisis of their marriage manifests.

With a slip of the tongue Michael admits to, but hardly apologizes for his affair with a young woman. Agnes is hardly up to the rubbing in of the fact when the Michael-turned-pompous dramatizes the well-circulated notion that with age, men just get better while "women go to pot!" in "It's a Well Known Fact." Agnes counters his chauvinistic call with one of the visual highlights of the evening with the number "Flaming Agnes." With this cabaret number, Ramsey kicks into life her peacock feathers (literally) and leaves Michael once again looking the fool.

As the second half of the marriage unfolds in the more somber second act, the primary theme

lies with the loss of identity once the children grow up. The sentimental bombshell hits with the ending of their life in the house (what we know as the bedroom) for the option of the conveniences of a small apartment. Ramsey and Lamberson conclude their partnership in the play with a series of well-harmonized duets.

A creative twist is added to the final scene as the audience gets a glimpse at the wonders of make-up when the aging couple unabashedly shed their youth and their wigs on stage.

"I Do! I Do!" is playing in the Blueroom, which makes for an intimate experience in theater, but the coziness almost becomes cramped by the end of the evening. Lack of space also limits the size of the accompanying group to piano and drums. A small orchestra would have picked up the tempo but such are the sacrifices. Both musicians gave an admirable performance, especially with the technical timing demanded of the piano player.

With only the bedroom setting, as much variety in props was used for a more visually interesting backdrop. The quality of the set and the richness of the costumes gives the otherwise step-above-mediocre production a touch of gold.

Playing in the Blueroom at Portland Civic Theater, "I Do! I Do!" will run through March 9. Call the box office at 226-3048 for specific performance dates.



Mark Day, a student in the College's Ornamental Horticulture class, prunes a tree outside the cafeteria. Late morning sunshine allowed class to try their field work skills.

Photo by Joel Miller

Renown mime to offer training

Due to a decline in student enrollment and finances, the College's administration has created a plan to generate more student interest in the College's curriculum.

Francisco Reynders, who is the creator of the Oregon Mime Theatre, will offer mime training to College students beginning March 9. The training will be in the form of a mini-course, one of several to be offered between March 4 and 22. The course will cost

\$20 and participants will receive one credit hour upon completion.

Reynders is an international artist who has studied with Etienne Decroux, the mime teacher of Marcel Marceau, in Paris. After touring through parts of Europe with performing groups, Reynders arrived in the United States and spent many years in the film industry, working with major studios as an art director,

scenic artist, sculptor and visual director.

Currently the assistant professor of theater and director of mime at Lewis and Clark College, Reynders has appeared throughout the United States in more than 450 colleges and universities.

Reynders comes to the College with high acknowledgment from both members in the educational field and the entertainment business.

CCC Cafeteria Announcement

We wish to inform CCC cafeteria customers that sulfite is not used in the cafeteria as a food preserver and we advise, if ordering from a restaurant, that you check to see if food is being preserved by sulfite.

What is sulfite?

Sulfite is a chemical often used as a food preservative. It prevents undesirable changes in food color, flavor or texture. Sulfite is especially used to preserve fruits and vegetables.

There have been several cases reported of adverse reactions caused by sulfite in foods. The reactions can be nausea, diarrhea, anaphylactic shock (a severe allergic reaction), asthma attacks and loss of consciousness.

Most people are not sensitive to sulfiting agents. At least to the point of becoming ill. However, if you have asthma your chances of becoming ill are much higher. If you are or may be sensitive to sulfiting agents you should check the ingredients of processed foods and if ordering from a restaurant, ask if any food have been treated with sulfiting agents.

