

# Insightful "Nuptials" breathes life in debut

By D. Dietrich  
Of The Print

Since June is the month typically known for numerous weddings with blushing spring brides, it seems only fitting that the play now running in Clackamas Community College's McLoughlin Theater is titled "Nuptials." With refreshing realism, the script, laden with comic relief, takes the cast to complete turnarounds through the course of preparing for a wedding.

Set in the basement of a church, playwright Joette Rose, a former Clackamas student, shows a behind-the-scenes viewpoint on the wonders of matrimony.

The selection of family characters on stage brings out the differences in moral views toward marriage and the expectations they can breed. Such views are seen primarily from the woman's perspective. Rose consciously aimed her discussion of marriage because, in a note from the playwright states, "for the first time in history marriage is no longer a woman's soul means of livelihood. It has become an option. And as such, some of the traditions, myths and misconceptions about marriage, and specifically marriage for women, need to be examined."

Important to note is that this is not merely a feminist play in which men play the ignorant partisans. It is a very human, insightful drama, full of real characters that come to life on stage. The College is lucky to be able to claim the debut of this innovative production.

The audience is introduced to the bride as she sweeps into the church basement in final preparation for her wedding. Lissa Diane Calder carries the lead as bride-to-be Deanna Rourke with a natural excitement and innocence. Her background is somewhat



Bride-to-be Deanna Rourke (Lissa Diane Calder) is comforted by Rev. Thomas Forsythe (Walter E. Whitney) upon learning of the groom's absence.

tragic, with a history of being moved from relative to relative to escape a bad home life. Her aunt and uncle with two daughters have become her family, but not without complications.

Coren and Vernon McVey (Patricia Lawrence and Rolland K. Grubbe) are her adopted parents who love her like a daughter. Their daughters Julia (Linda Kuntz) and Alyssa (Lynda Hale), however, haven't always loved her like a sister. The real crisis arrives with the announcement that the groom has not arrived, for reasons yet to unfold.

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When the chips are down the real emotions come out, for better or

worse. On the worse side is the snobbish disposition of the groom's wealthy parents, played by Marlyce Scherrie Baird and Ian Byington. In a more traditional characterization we see a

shrewish mother-in-law-to-be, who is sure that Deanna's motive is money, but, of course, we know better.

While the tension is high, the real reason for the groom's absence is discovered in a stairwell scene between Vernon and Mark (Joshua Collins), the groom's best friend. Mark is the catalyst for the groom's misplacement. Without meaning to hurt anyone, Mark just wanted to save his childhood

pal from a commitment that he didn't fully realize.

The main drama shifts somewhere in the middle of the play and focuses on the relationship between Julia and Deanna. Kuntz gives an excellent performance as the more liberal-minded woman who finds Deanna's need for marriage more pitiful than sentimental.

Julia is living with her boyfriend but doesn't see any definite plans for marriage to him or anyone else until she is settled in her career. The argument that ensues between the two young women explores the reasons and fulfillments for their differences without making a preference to either.

When the crisis is over the important event is not the marriage but the growth and self-knowledge of the people involved. Rose shifts the emphasis of the play around to give, not just a black-and-white perspective, but a whole spectrum of colors, including the rose-colored glasses we'd all like to look out of.

The set of the play is nothing if not realistic. One can even smell that familiar musty scent of a church basement. Denomination notwithstanding, the walls are complete with condensation stains and priceless crayoned art by schoolchildren adorn the walls.

The play originated with the playwright but cast made it come alive as the characters breathed their first breath in the actors portrayals. Directors Jim Nicodemus and Jack Shields are to be congratulated for an effective and lively production of a close-to-the-heart play.

Performances will continue on June 7 and 8 at 8 p.m. and June 9 at 2:30 p.m.

## Theater week celebrated

Portland area theaters are uniting in an effort to support President Reagan's designation of June 2-8, 1985 as National Theater Week. In a campaign to honor live theater and its artists, participating theaters will take \$1 off their ticket price with a ticket stub or box office receipt from any other participating theater through Labor Day 1985.

For the entire summer, theaters will support the cooperative program brought about by the Theatre Consortium, a "unique group of directors and managers of local live theatres who regularly meet to solve problems and create new ideas in a cooperative manner."

A list of participating theaters follows. Call them or

check your local calendar listing for plays produced this summer.

Artists Repertory Theatre (223-6281 ext. 213), Columbia Theatre Company (232-9901), Firehouse Theatre (248-4737), Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center (243-7930), Lake Oswego Community Theatre (635-3901), Musical Company (235-4551), The New Rose Theatre (222-2487), Oregon Contemporary Theatre (295-5917), Portland Civic Theatre (226-3048), Sirius Theatre (224-9481), Storefront Theatre (248-0199), Summer Festival Company at PSU (229-4612), Sumus Theatre Ensemble (220-0651), Willamette Repertory Theatre (224-4491).

Wednesday, June 5, 1985

## CCC Cafeteria

*The Cafeteria*

*will be open during*

*the summer session*

*from 7am-3pm*



