

In review

Irish play resumes stage at 'bare bones' theatre

by Jay Milton Osborne III
Contributing Writer
Irish poet and dramatist J.M. Synge's play, "Deirdre of the Sorrows," derived from Irish folklore, played Dublin's Abbey Theatre in January of 1910. 85 years later to the month, Portland's Paula Productions presents the fateful, passionate tale again.

smoldering between Deirdre (Catherine Egan) and Naisi (Joseph Derting); when they touch, sparks almost ignite the theater. Their passion is so great that one feels uncomfortably like a voyeur.

nut or apple," said John Millington Synge. With some mastery of the Irish brogue, each of the actors got a chance to develop a fully-flavored speech. Although for the untrained ear, some of the dialogue was hard to follow.

"In a good play, every speech should be as fully flavored as a nut or apple."

-John Millington Synge

Aging, loneliness and fate are the main themes here. It is no surprise that the death scene is the longest scene. Synge said of mourning: "The grief

Some may be put off by the basic, bare bones and somewhat untidy theater that is obviously struggling to survive. On Jan. 26, the eager-to-please house manager brought in extra seating for the larger than expected opening night audience.

Twigs, branches and boulders served as set for the rambling stage in this loft of a theater. In one scene, Bruce Fraser, as Conchubor, sat on one of the sharper looking boulders. It looked as if it must have hurt.

Early on, passions start

Their fire gives the story its purpose, while holding the play together and driving it onward.

Make no mistake, this is a dark story. Characters snarl at each other. They are often a mangy, dirty-looking lot, who would scare the wits out of you in a dark alley.

Smudged faces, bare feet and bony knees demonstrate the primitiveness of the time. The costumes are little more than layerings of homespun and skins. This is not the machine age.

"In a good play, every speech should be as fully flavored as a

of the keen [a wail for the dead] is no personal complaint for the death of one woman over eighty years, but seems to contain the whole passionate rage that lurks somewhere in every native of the island (Ireland).

In this cry of pain, the inner consciousness of the people seems to lay itself bare for an instant, and to reveal the mood of beings who feel their isolation in the face of a universe that wars on them with winds and sea."

Folks, this is relevant theater. See "Deirdre of the Sorrows," find the relevance. It's there.



Photo contributed by Paula Productions

Deirdre (Catherine Egan) and Naisi (Joseph Derting) defy warnings to stay away from each other in "Deirdre of the Sorrows."

CCC students take battle to capitol

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ous status. Two dozen students are writing protest letters to legislators in Salem. The ASG will follow up by leading a delegation to the state capitol Feb. 23. Student Lobby Day, to rally with concerned students from 16 community colleges and eight universities across Oregon before speaking to their representatives.

CCC Dean of Instructional Services Dian Connett was delighted about the organized response. She also thought the shift in need grants was accomplished

surreptitiously. "As I understand, it happened at the last moment and some of the implications weren't fully realized until much later. We can talk as administrators, but this is an issue that directly affects students and the legislators need to hear from them," she said.

The ASG is renting two vans which will accommodate 30 students in order to visit the state capitol and show support for the flat allocation of need grants.

Transportation and lunches will be provided to students who

would like to attend the day-long event. While the delegation is gearing up for the trip to Salem, the ASG and student body will continue to write letters and make phone calls to state senators and representatives from their district, Caudle said. Nguyen said the ASG is also asking students to participate in a phone and fax blitz on Feb. 16. "It's just another way to get the word out about this. We'll try to do as many different things as we can," he said.

For details, call ASG at ext. 2247.

Oregon Need Grants

Oregon Need Grants are not to be confused with Federal Pell Grants which are also awarded to students who demonstrate financial hardship. Oregon students receive the same amount of Pell grant regardless of what college they attend, but students who go to a private college may receive a Need Grant that is three or four times greater than the amount a public college or university student is awarded. In 1993, the state legislature gave more grant dollars to private students based on the fact that

their tuition is higher, not based on their financial needs.

First created in the early 1970s, the Need Grants provided renewable state funding to Oregon undergraduates at community and state colleges. For 20 years the awards were the same size regardless of the type of school attended. Now, with costs of education spiraling upwards, the grant reductions have come at a particularly inopportune time for many public college students across Oregon.



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For more information contact the CCC counseling department at 657-6958, ext. 2556 or 2266.