

OKLAHOMA: It's Hammerstein time!

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It's a nice, breezy, full-of-talented-actors play. Guns and/or knives settle most disputes. And – if no guns are handy – some serious necking will solve any relationship problem, whether said necking comes in the form of “Oklahoma hellos” or “Persian good-byes.”

Speaking of Persia, James Sharinghousen's portrayal of the slightly scummy peddler,

Ali Hakim, was a highlight of *Oklahoma!* His bewildered fallings in and out of marriage with assorted hyperactive females made for some interesting scenes.

The two leads, played by Emily Jackson (as Laurey) and Nick Jones (as Curly), showcased their vocal talents as they sang their way through the production. Brianna Shewbert, as Ado Annie, had enough energy to fuel the entire production

by herself, and Tanya Earle, as Aunt Eller, kept things delightfully sarcastic.

The whole production was bursting with movement and sound. The live orchestra – while a little loud at times for those members of the audience seated right below it – added something truly wonderful to the experience.

It was fascinating to watch the music, actors, costumes, scenes and set interact with

each other.

I have heard that many people either love or hate Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* I would encourage both sides to take a step back, leave their assumptions, obsessions and egos at the door and just go to see some inspired performances and hear some lovely music. Maybe it will be a painful experience; maybe it will be glorious.

It will always be good.

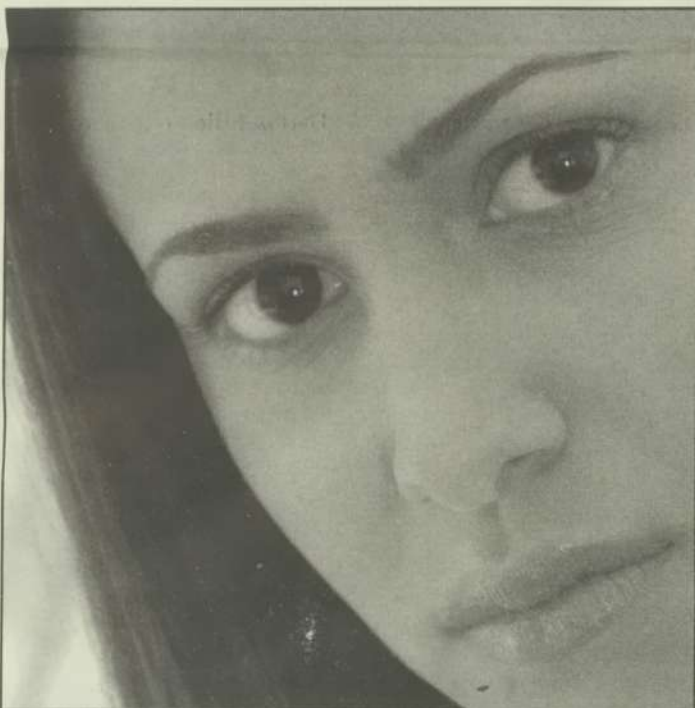
The show runs in the Osterman Theater from Thurs., May 31 through Sat., June 2 at 7 p.m., with a matinee showing at 2:30 on Sun. June 3. For more information, please contact Jennifer Schwartzman of the Theater Department at (503) 657-6958, ext. 2356.



ABOVE: Tanya Earle and Mark Polendey dancing. RIGHT: Brianna Shewbert and James Sharinghousen holding each other close as they perform.



All photos by Katie Wilson Clackamas Print



'Countdown' comic commences

David Stark

A&E Editor

The wait is over, and the countdown has begun.

But what is the countdown to?

That is one of many questions that will be answered in DC Comics' series *Countdown*.

Countdown is the sequel to DC's previous year-long maxiseries, *52*, and will be released in the same manner: one issue a week for 52 weeks. However, while *52* went from issue 1 through 51, *Countdown* will, as its name implies, count down from issue 51 to issue 0.

The teaser image for *Countdown* started a flurry of speculation about the content of the series, as it depicted Batman in chain mail wielding a

sword, the silver-age Flash, Donna Troy in her old Wonder Girl attire, someone dressed as Red Robin, as well as the bodies of recently-killed characters Blue Beetle, The Question, Jade and Maxwell Lord.

In addition to the teaser image, there were five styles of pins given out at conventions advertising storylines in the comic. The first four pins say “WWMMD?” (What Would Mary Marvel Do?), “I Found Ray Palmer,” “Look to the Skies” and “Jimmy Olson Must Die.” The final pin proclaims “Darkseid Rules!”

So far, *Countdown* has shown us that things are afoot in the universe that the heroes know nothing about. Characters such as the Monitor, who has been absent for more than 20 years real-time, return to deal with problems that have surfaced since

the end of 2005's *Infinite Crisis* miniseries.

Countdown is by no means a light read. Like so many comics of late, one must be knowledgeable about 20 years worth of comics history to understand what's going on. This leads to only hardcore fans picking up the series.

However, by no means is it something that should be missed. If any newcomers really want to get into the comic, then the bare essential that they need to read beforehand are *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, *Identity Crisis* and *Infinite Crisis*, in that order.

So while *Countdown* may not be something that can be entered into easily, its all-star list of writers ensures that it will be worth the effort.

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