



History's Mystery

What really happens in *Copenhagen*.

The history of war, any war, is full of dark meetings, secret negotiations and world-altering decisions made in back rooms behind closed doors. The results of some of those decisions have such horrendous outcomes, such devastating results, that many of those meetings have acquired an almost mythic quality.

One such meeting took place in 1941 in Copenhagen, Denmark between long-time friends Neils Bohr his student, Werner Heisenberg. What they discussed at that pivotal meeting has intrigued historians ever since.

The two had collaborated extensively in the early '20s in Copenhagen. In 1927 Heisenberg, who later won the Nobel Prize in 1932 for establishing the field of quantum physics, returned to Germany to teach. There he conducted experiments that led him to believe it could be possible to create a nuclear weapon.

Almost a decade later he was recruited by the Nazis and with WWII in full swing, he secretly made a trip to Copenhagen and met with

Bohr. No one knows what they discussed in that meeting. Was Heisenberg seeking guidance from his former teacher in developing the atom bomb? Was he hoping to recruit Bohr to the Nazi camp? The theories abound.

Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen* explores the possibilities behind one of WWII's greatest mysteries in a story of friendship, risk and betrayal. Winner of the 2000 Tony Award for Best Play, Carol Horne directs the Lord Leebrick presentation of this gripping tale.

William Campbell (VLT's *Death of a Salesman* and *Lion in Winter*) and Diane Johnson (Lord Leebrick's *Spinning Into Butter*, work with the Brit Theatre Company) play Niels and Margarethe Bohr. Corvallis-based Robert Hirsh, who played Niels Bohr just last fall in a different production, now plays Werner Heisenberg.

Riveting and full of suspense, you'll hope the intermission ends quickly.

Copenhagen shows at Lord Leebrick Theatre April 8, 9, 14-17, 21-24 and 28-30. LOf on to www.lordleebrick.com for tickets or more info. **ew**

Class vs. Cash

Denying convention never goes out of style.

You *Can't Take It With You* is one of those rare plays in which the title sums up the principal message without losing any resonance. The play, staged by Willamette Repertory Theatre, is a classic American comedy infused with the simple theme of pursuing personal happiness before financial security. Though *You Can't Take It With You* was written in 1936, the play's ageless, feel-good humor traverses generational divides.

Much of the action centers on the Sycamores, a batty middle-class family living in a chaotic madhouse where nonconformity is encouraged and everyone, including an IRS agent, is met with equal acceptance regardless of personal idiosyncrasies.

Enter John Kirby, the son of wealthy, pompous parents who falls in love with Alice Sycamore, the most sensible member of the clan. When the two families meet, tension caused by class and personality differences results in fast-paced bursts of hilarity.

"It's madcap, zany fun, but with a message behind it," said Director Kirk M. Boyd. "In a world where increasingly the classes are being split apart, which is the path to take? Personal happiness or personal wealth? You can tell which side the authors came down on it."

Boyd believes casting is key to a show's success and some of Eugene's best actors form this line-up. He also carefully chose visiting artists Philip Davidson and Michelle Morain for the important roles of Grandpa Vanderhof and Penny Sycamore, the "heads" of the Sycamore family.

Morain is returning after performing a dramatic role as Josie in Willamette Rep's production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten* last season. Morain said she and Boyd have a "rare" working relationship and under Boyd's direction, Morain has been developing a character that she finds both demanding and delightful.

"I love doing Penny," Morain said. "She's an interesting mind to get to know. She just feels things and reacts." But the lack of thought preceding Penny's actions is what makes her difficult to portray, making Penny one of the more challenging roles Morain has played.

But Morain also identifies with Penny. "To choose to be a professional actor as a career means you're not setting yourself for a lucrative retirement situation," she said. "A lot of people in theater live by the Sycamore choice. It's a lot of happy, poor people."

And like the Sycamores, she plans to stick with her passion. "I hope I join those that croak on stage."

Catch *You Can't Take It With You* April 6, 7, 9, 14-17 & 21-24 at the Hult Center's Soreng Theater. Log on to www.willrep.org or call 343-9903 for more info.

— Sara Brickner



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