

Monkeying Around with Evolution

Radio theater 'scopes' intelligent design debate.

It's been 80 years since the 1925 Scopes Trial pitted Darwinism against creationism, and yet the debate still rages over religious doctrine being taught alongside science in America's classrooms.

Presently, a trial is being held in Pennsylvania over intelligent design theory's inclusion in public schools. Just last week a Harvard professor testified that teaching ID is "probably the worst thing I have ever heard of in science education." (Yet leave it to our not-so-intelligently designed prez to support teaching both theories.)

With all this controversy, what better timing could the Hult Center's presentation of *The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial*, depicting the events of the Scopes Trial, possibly have?

The performance stars Ed Asner, John de Lancie (who played the omnipotent Q on *Star*

Trek: The Next Generation), Alley Mills (the mom from *The Wonder Years*) and North

Eugene High School student Kyle Schnabel. Based on original court transcripts from the Scopes Trial, the performance doesn't take fictional liberties like the film classic *Inherit the Wind*, starring Spencer Tracy. It's all about the facts, ma'am.

Being historically accurate, the play provides the audience with some surprises. For example the trial was somewhat of a publicity stunt to benefit the sagging econ-

omy of Dayton, Tenn.

L.A. Theatre Works produces the show and is regarded as the preeminent radio theater group in the U.S. Sets are at a minimum, sound effects echo through the audience and actors use standing microphones, just as in radio.

"The whole point of a radio show is that it

throws the imaginative elements back at the audience. It focuses on the written word. Very quickly you'll lose a sense of [set]," says de Lancie, who plays defense attorney Clarence Darrow. "You will not be unlike those 1,000

biles, or you think somewhere down the line of your descendents is a monkey who smells his soiled finger and passes out, there's something to learn from *The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial*.

Or maybe de Lancie is onto something. "I had suggested that the narrator be a monkey," he says, laughing.

Catch *The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial*

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— John de Lancie

people in the [1925] courtroom who were listening and watching."

Whether you believe a god created humankind like Germans create luxury automo-

7:30 pm, Tuesday, Oct. 25 at Silva Concert Hall. Tickets are \$20-\$36 with discounts for students, youth and seniors. Call 682-5000 or log on to www.hultcenter.org

ew



John de Lancie

OPENING NIGHTS

Lend Me a Tenor at Very Little Theatre

Opens Friday, Oct. 21

VLT launches its 76th season with *Lend Me a Tenor*, a Ken Ludwig farce that focuses on the backstage antics of a struggling Cleveland opera company. The company has enlisted a world-famous tenor for its gala performance of *Otello*. But when the star falls unconscious, everything falls apart – from an apparent suicide and ardent backstage rendezvous to mistaken identities and dual Otellos performing onstage. Show dates are Oct. 21-23, 27-30 and Nov. 3-6 and 11-12. Purchase tickets by calling 344-7751.



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