

WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS

VLT's *Dear World* is a slight but enjoyable musical about a gang of misfits saving the world from corporate greed

Technically speaking, *Dear World* isn't a very good musical. In fact, it's well-nigh ridiculous, a shameless crowd-pleaser that is somehow baggy and thin at once, swapping character development and narrative coherence for broad strokes of platitude and attitude stitched together by the pomp-and-circus-pants of forced Parisian gaiety and bunk philosophical truisms. The songs are pretty good, though.

And big deal. *Star Wars* isn't a very good movie, technically speaking, and for a lot of the same reasons. And yet, like *Star Wars*, a decent production of *Dear World* is capable of surviving on enthusiasm alone, like a carnival in the rain.

Very Little Theatre's current production of the musical succeeds despite the ample impediments provided by its patchwork (and overworked) book, written by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. VLT's staging overcomes a pandering spirit of political bonhomie on the strength of director Michael P. Watkins' strong guidance, which seeks uplift through pure spirit, and strong performances, especially from the leads.

I suspect the show was chosen for its startling timeliness and the Manichean morality that drives it: A trio of corporate robber barons, named Presidents One, Two and Three (Will Vanderbilt, Claude Offenbacher and Rob Roberts) discover traces of oil directly beneath a Parisian bistro in 1945. Emboldened by a devious prospector (Gene Chin), the corporate thugs enlist an upstart executive, Julian (Sheldon Hall), to blow the place up. Julian foils the plot by attempting suicide, after which the corporation's intentions are revealed to the colorful Countess Aurelia (Michelle Sellers, who carries the show with her sure comic timing and powerful, attractive voice) and her gang of oddballs.

As mentioned, the plot is flimsy and embryonic in places — especially, and inexplicably, in the love interest that develops between Julian and bistro waitress Nina (the wonderful Sabrina Gross) — while shooting off into absurd and ballooning tangents at other moments, such as the prolonged portrait of the Countess and her clan, which includes Mme. Constance (Erikajane Johnston), Mme. Gabrielle (Annie Pusey), The Mute (Darius Bunce) and others enlisted to save the world from greed and destruction.

It goes without saying that *Dear World* achieves a certain unmistakable frisson, a shock of recognition, in this Age of Trump; much of the pleasure to be found in VLT's production derives from the realization that the more things change, the more they really do stay the same. The show, thanks in large part to Watkins' nimble direction, comes across as a kind



ERIKAJANE JOHNSTON, MICHELLE SELLERS AND ANNIE PUSEY IN VLT'S *DEAR WORLD*

of slapstick tweeting back at power — a rambunctious and loose-limbed response to evil by a gaggle of grotesques and misfits. It's a revolutionary fairytale with its tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Beyond these qualities, VLT's production just looks and sounds great; the sets are by turns airy and plush, as the action moves from the outdoor bistro to the underground lair of the Countess, and the musical numbers are bouncy, triumphant and often quite funny. The whole production banks on a kind of nostalgic simplicity, a dreamy sense of good and evil, and in that sense it cashes in nicely — for all its world-saving schemes, it doesn't take itself too seriously.

Dear World plays through April 8 at Very Little Theatre; \$19-\$23, tickets at thevlt.com or 541-344-7751.

CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad: **CALL** 541.484.0519 **EMAIL** classy@eugeneweekly.com
WEB classifieds.eugeneweekly.com **WRITE** 1251 Lincoln St. Eugene, OR 97401
VISIT our office Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

LINE ADS: \$11/3 LINES
 ADDITIONAL LINES: \$4

BULLETIN BOARD

Announcements

"HUMANITY AT THE CROSSROADS"
FREE TALK by Michiko Ishikawa
 Sunday, April 2, 2:00 pm
ASHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY
 410 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland
 share-international-west.org

Classes

LEVEL I REIKI CLASS Materials, Attunement, Training. \$125, 10a-5p, Sat April 8, Email: cynthia27@q.com to reserve space.

Lost & Found

FOUND: BICYCLE PANNIER COVER, 14th & Oak in Eugene, last month. Call 541-342-1668 to ID and retrieve.

Wanted

PAID RESEARCH STUDY AT THE UOFO
 Recruiting mothers of young children
 Eligibility based on household income
 Call 541-346-4684 for more information

Pets

GREENHILL HUMANE SOCIETY Everybody Deserves a Good Home. Open Fr-Tu 11a-6p, closed We/Th 88530 Green Hill Rd 541-689-1503 and 1st Avenue Shelter open Tu-Fr 10a-6p & Sa 10a-5:30p, closed Su/Mo 3970 W. 1st Ave 541-844-1777. green-hill.org See our Pet of the Week!

SHELTER ANIMAL RESOURCE ALLIANCE
 S.A.R.A.'s Treasures Gift & Thrift Shop.
 Volunteer, Donate, Shop, **ADOPT!**
 871 River Road, Open Daily 10am-6pm.
 541-607-8892 sarastreasures.org
LOOK FOR THIS WEEK'S RESCUED CAT.

Adoption/Family Services

PREGNANT? CONSIDERING ADOPTION? Call us first. Living expenses, housing, medical, and continued support afterwards. Choose adoptive family of your choice. Call 24/7. 877-362-2401

EVENTS

JOYFUL HEART PSYCHIC & WELLNESS FAIR
 Seeks vendors/readers for community fair June 4. Earlybird booth prices until 3/31. JoyfulHeartPsychicFair.com

THE PATH OF THE SHAMAN Begins May 12-14, 2017 Roseburg, Oregon, Taught by Ginger Lee (www.SacredWaysCo.com) Assisted by Lynne Kogut (www.dancingbearcenter.com) 406 270-8129 or lkogut@mydfn.net

FOR SALE

Household

***CLEARANCE MATTRESS SALE 30-70% OFF**
 Store Prices. Sets Start at \$150. Brand new. Must Sell. 541-799-8079

Lawn & Garden

1993 KUBOTA L2950 4WD 31Hp, Only 1898 Hours, Diesel Tractor With Loader, 4-cylinder \$2500 Call: (971) 217-6409

1998 KUBOTA L35 4X4 GST Transmission, Power Steering, 35 HP, 1083 Hours, Kubota TL720 Front Loader, Kubota BT900 SubFrame Backhoe. \$7500 Call: (831) 216-8246

MUSIC/ENTERTAINMENT

Singer/Songwriters

SINGERS WANTED Inspirational Sounds, an award winning, non-profit, community choir singing African-American Gospel has openings for singers in all sections. If you are interested in this vibrant, high-energy group, call Carol at 541-995-8459 or 541-517-3770.

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

BLU MIST RESTAURANT AND BAR (an Asian-Fusion concept) is now hiring through our website www.blumistrb.com: Front of the house (Bar manager, bartender, Assistant GM, server, host/hostess, busser). Back of the house (Sous Chef, line cook, prep cook, dishwasher). Apply at www.blumistrb.com

CARRY-ON TRAILER IN COBURG has immediate openings for General Laborers, Production welders, painters, assemblers, forklift drivers. Can't Weld? We will train you. Apply in person Mon-Fri 8am-4pm at 91218 N. Coburg Industrial Way. EOE.

SDANCERS Tired of your current club! **SWEET ILLUSIONS** has day & night shifts available. No experience, can train. Excellent tips! 541-852-8625 or 541-517-7196 **THE HOTTEST CLUB IN LANE COUNTY!**

LOST YOUR JOB? Place a free line ad here (up to 4 lines, 160 characters) for 2 weeks. Briefly list your skills/experience & contact info. Email to: office@eugeneweekly.com or call 541-484-0519

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

ADVERTISE WITH THE EUGENE WEEKLY

CALL US TODAY
 541-484-0519



Income Tax Bookkeeping Payroll

We will come to you!

541.342.1040
 329 W. 13th Ave #F accountants-on-the-go.com



AFFORDABLE WILLS, TRUSTS, GUARDIANSHIPS, SS DISABILITY & SSI REPRESENTATION & LEGAL ADVICE

ALICE M. PLYMELL
 132 EAST BROADWAY | SUITE 718
 541-343-9341
 ALSO MAKES HOME VISITS
 SPANISH INTERPRETER AVAILABLE

YOGA WEST
 EUGENE

BE the HEALING
 BOOST YOUR HEALING POTENTIAL!
 Mondays 7-8:30 pm April 3- May 22
 All Levels 541-337-8769
 3635 Hilyard | yogawesteugene.com

THE HEART HAS NO WRINKLES: SEXUALITY AND INTIMACY IN THE LATER YEARS

Sassi
 Sexual Awareness and Support for Seniors Initiative

Whether you consider yourself an older adult or someone who cares about them, this class series is for you!

6 CLASS SERIES
 STARTS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH
 ENDS WEDNESDAY, MAY 10TH
 5:30-7pm
 Registration \$50

Lane Community College **Planned Parenthood**
 Care. No matter what.