



CHANNEL YOUR INNER LIGHT

Trek Theatre celebrates fifth anniversary with adaptation of classic episode

PHOTO BY NICHOLAS SIEGRIST

It's clear by now that human civilization won't change its ways to deter the worst-case scenario of climate change. With escalating temperatures and longer droughts, it may be that humanity has run its course.

That's why *Star Trek: The Next Generation's* classic episode "The Inner Light" somewhat foreshadows our future.

Trek Theatre, Eugene's volunteer-led sci-fi theatre troupe, takes on what is considered one of the best episodes of the *Star Trek* series — one fans always request, says Christina Allaback, the production's director.

Trek Theatre will celebrate its fifth anniversary by staging an adaptation of "The Inner Light." The episode has

Captain Jean Luc-Picard experience life on the dying planet of Kataan, which is slowly becoming inhabitable due to a drought caused by changing climate from a dying sun. The civilization, however, doesn't have the technology to leave the planet.

It's often easy to draw a line from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* to universal issues — much like Shakespeare's work — because the series explores the human condition, Allaback says.

Trek Theatre has been telling these sorts of stories since 2013. The group kicked it all off with an adaptation of "Tin Man," which was prefaced with an introduction by sci-fi and TV writer David Bischoff. Bischoff lived in Eugene until his

death in March 2018 and wrote the *Star Trek* episode.

Aside from that, Trek Theatre doesn't exactly have the accolades of Shakespearian heavies and *Star Trek* actors Patrick Stewart and William Shatner. But Allaback says the local actors have passion for the series and the sci-fi genre, and that makes for a compelling performance.

"What I love is that these people love it, and you can feel it," she says. "These people love *Star Trek* and sci-fi and really shows in the performance."

It's meaningful work for Allaback, who jokes that she's finally putting her Theatre degrees to good use by directing the crew of Trek Theatre.

The production of "The Inner Light" has a shorter running time than the episode, but the coming performance will also include a retrospective of snippets from past shows, Allaback says.

The troupe's repertoire branched out from focusing exclusively on *Star Trek*, with productions such as the sci-fi classic *Forbidden Planet* and a live adaptation of the radio performance that started the franchise of the *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*.

Allaback says the Trekkies are looking into doing more ambitious projects in the future, like a musical version of the legendary *Star Trek: The Original Series* episode "Arena," where Captain James T. Kirk battles a Gorn (a species of badass bipedal reptilians).

In the meantime, Earth might be going the way of Kataan, so go see the production of "The Inner Light" as a prognosis of our future. Even if humanity dies, perhaps Trump's Space Force could somehow preserve the memories of our civilization.

If so, I just hope they include "The Inner Light" along with Bach's Brandenburg Concertos. ■

Trek Theatre's "The Inner Light" runs 5-6 pm Sept. 1 and Sept. 7, and 2 pm Sept. 2 and Sept. 8, at Amazon Community Center, 2700 Hilyard Street. The performance also visits Central City Park, 600 S.W. Madison Avenue, Corvallis, 3-4 pm Sunday, Sept. 16; performances are FREE.

ANIMAL HOUSE PHOTOS EVOKE AN EXOTIC TIME

John Bauguess captured an era with his camera in Cottage Grove

These days, when just about everyone has a camera and most of us have appeared as "extras" in someone else's photos, it can be easy to forget that just a few decades ago the situation was quite different. Back in the late 1970s, amateur photography was the domain of serious hobbyists.

Among them was John Bauguess, chronicling the local scene with gusto and unusual skill. His wide-angle monochrome shots of bygone Lane County, a few hundred of which are now stored for posterity at University of Oregon archives, are a historical marker of sorts — and a treasure trove of information about the past.

In 1977 Bauguess turned his lens to the filming of *Animal House* in Cottage Grove. Then, as now, the town's Main Street had a down-home vibe straight out of central casting,

a vibe that appealed to director John Landis. His film's final parade scene occupies only a few minutes in the final cut, but it took eight days to shoot.

For a week, Cottage Grove's downtown was a hive of Hollywood activity. Eight hundred extras were hired. Several dozen of them are visible in the small selection of Bauguess inkjet prints, now on display through September at the Cottage Grove Museum.

The photos are as remarkable for what they don't show. Aside from one photo of budding star John Belushi, they are essentially pedestrian. They show average-looking town denizens idling on the set's fringes, waiting for the next live action.

By focusing on the sidelines, Bauguess allows the humdrum details to dominate. Filmed in the 1970s, the movie is set in 1962. Yesteryear's hats, coats, hairstyles and signage

seem exotic. They weren't shot abroad. Instead they were taken just four decades ago.

But the effect is similar. The photographs' minor anachronisms fascinate, and keep the viewer's eye moving through the frame in search of more. Everything is altered, it seems, except the buildings and backdrops, many of which appear similar today.

Whether subjects change over time or remain static, their photographic depictions almost invariably become more interesting. And when the subject is familiar — a local main street, say — this is doubly so.

Bauguess' photos drive this point home. Local photo and history buffs should make the quick trip south to see them. ■

John Bauguess' Animal House photos are display through September at the Cottage Grove Museum, 147 N. H Street, Cottage Grove; hours 1-4 pm Friday through Sunday.



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