

A young woman, Julia, arrives at the house, bringing news from the outside and additional discord.

The people in the house become paranoid. Attacking birds outside the house pursue them, and perhaps their paranoia is beginning to consume them inside the house.

Birdemic

"I first considered 'The Birds' because it had a known name connected to it," Shaffer said. "I also wanted something newer. This play is not just about the birds attacking. It's about the relationship of the people trapped in the house."

Brown said "it was easy to pick 'The Birds' because of the high diversity of quality in the script, and knowing it was in the very capable hands of Sheila Shaffer."

Though Shaffer brings a wealth of experience to her position as director, this is her first production at the Astor Street Opry Company. Her theater work in this area began in 2002 at Cannon Beach's Coaster Theatre.


Asked what he wanted people to take away from the play, Brandon Hurd, who plays Nat, said, "I want people to do a double-take when they see a bird."

"There are live and recorded sound effects," Shaffer said. "The birds are pretty much always there."

Her advice to audience members? "Ask yourselves what you would do under the same circumstances."

Barbi England, who plays Diane, admits to having a dark side, and is enthusiastic about performing in "The Birds."

"I have done mostly comedy," England said, "so I welcomed the chance to stretch. I like the darkness. That's why this play is so much fun for me — the stretch."

"The Birds" has a definite dark side. "It's a psychological thriller," Brown said, adding that it's probably appropriate for audiences 14 and older. 

IF YOU GO

"The Birds," a drama by Conor McPherson

Astor Street Opry Company Playhouse
(129 West Bond St.)

Performances: Friday, Oct. 6; Saturday, Oct. 7; Friday, Oct. 13; Saturday, Oct. 14; Sunday, Oct. 15; Friday, Oct. 20; Saturday, Oct. 21.

For Friday and Saturday shows, house opens at 6:30 p.m.; the show begins at 7 p.m. Sunday matinee begins at 2 p.m.

Tickets, \$7 to \$16, are on sale one hour before all shows. Call 503-325-6104 for tickets.

Reservations are recommended.



PHOTOS BY COLIN MURPHEY

Actors rehearse a scene from "The Birds" at the Astor Street Opry Company under the watchful eye of director Sheila Shaffer on the bottom far right.



Actors arrive at the Astor Street Opry Company for a rehearsal of the "The Birds."



Barbi England, left, and Justin Germond, right, rehearse a scene from a production of "The Birds" by the Astor Street Opry Company. The show runs Oct. 6 through 21.