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Idealism's High Price

continued ▲ *from front*

donors.

It was not surprising that the play had difficulty finding a venue. The play has been turned down or shut down from New York to Ashland. Because it contains criticism of Israeli policy, it is assumed by some to be anti-Israeli or anti-Semitic. A Vancouver, B.C., theater board member opposed the play's staging there while admitting he had neither read it nor seen it performed. A critic dismissed it as "unvarnished propaganda."

"I don't see this as anti-Israeli or anti-Zionist at all," Walton says. "What I'd really like, is to see this generate discussion."

"I don't see this as anti-Semitic

at all," Ward says. "To me, this is just depicting (Corrie's) experience there, not picking sides. She was acting out of humanitarian motives and lived with the Palestinian people." Along the way, she engaged in an ongoing dialogue with an Israeli army sergeant.

The play also celebrates Corrie as "an idealistic young person trying to make a difference," Ward says. "She was saying some incredibly articulate, perceptive things. She was trying to educate people back home."

Ward, the play's director, and Walton both have extensive theatrical backgrounds. McLaughlin's only experience so far is as an audience member.

However, she is a veteran peace activist and, like Corrie, in her youth traveled to a foreign country for idealistic purposes, in her case serving with the Peace Corps in Morocco.

"I like the idea of an idealistic young woman who takes action for change," she says. "I saw similarities with the life of Ben Linder," who was murdered while doing humanitarian work in Nicaragua. "I admire people who could do that on their own."

"What Rachel was doing was really a humanitarian mission. This doesn't cast blame on the Israeli people. We encourage people to come to the play, and there'll be discussions to follow."

Corrie is played by Madeleine Rogers, 16, a junior at Grant High School, and Amanda Jensen, 30, two actresses to represent a younger and older Corrie.

"The more I read the script, the more I was sucked into this," Rogers says. "(Corrie) was such an incredible girl, such a strong, creative person."

The play will debut on Thursday night with repeat performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; and 2 p.m. Sundays through Oct. 30. Tickets are \$18 general, \$15 students, seniors and teachers.

For more information call 503-293-3062, or visit nwctc.org.

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