

arts & entertainment



'Country Wife' rates as amusing, delightful play

Review by Carla Engstrom

A man with nothing to hide stood undressed before the audience. He shielded himself with a bouquet of

flowers. His face showed no emotion until three ladies plucked a few flowers from his bouquet, and then he cringed.

So went the opening scene in the

Howell Theatre production of *The Country Wife*, which opened Friday night and will run through Saturday.

Horner (Jack Honor) convinced London, with the help of a quack by the name of Quack (Harley Lofton), that he was no longer a virile man, but a eunuch. By this masquerade, he was able to take liberties with the unsuspecting ladies.

The Restoration play is set in 1675 and the plot is easy to understand. A playgoer unfamiliar with 17th century English may find it takes a little effort to catch on to the language used.

Carefree, immoral world depicted

The Restoration period brought about a type of drama classified as "The Comedy of Manners." Through this art form, playwright William Wycherley depicts the carefree, immoral world of the aristocracy.

He pictures the social scene of London with bitter mockery.

The action flows smoothly and the cast keeps the audience entertained throughout the three-act play. The whole evening is full of delightful comedy.

The actors play well together. In one scene, Horner, Harcourt (George Hansen) and Dorilant (Cliff Radcliff) interact in a manner that draws the audience into their insight of aristocratic morals. Their actions appear lewd at times and transform them into believable characters.

The lead is played by Honor, who speaks clearly and is easily understood despite the 17th century English.

His characterization is consistent and his interpretation of the part brings an appreciation for the well-executed acting.

Comical characterization

Roger Nelson plays Pinchwife. He comically characterizes a not-too-wise husband of the country wife. His fretting and worrying over his wife's affections come out well in his rough, ungentlemanly voice. His jealousy comes out in his stupidity.

Music was added to the play. At the side of the stage is a harpsichord, which gives qualities of a gentle minuet nature. The harpsichordist, Steph Kallos, dresses in 17th century costume and plays as though she had been reared with the instrument.

The sets are simply designed pillars and

screens, which add to the 17th century feeling.

The country wife, Margery Pinchwife (Suzy Wurtz), could be stereotyped as a pretty, but dumb blonde. Her character is a bit too honest for the immoral actions of the aristocrats. She almost blows the secret that Honor is not a eunuch. Her interpretation of a giggling country bumpkin is amusing.

Letters switched

In one scene, she is forced by her husband to write a vile letter to her lover, Honor. But she switched it with one she had written earlier and swallowed the letter she was forced to write. She carries on a hectic and entertaining conversation with her husband through a mouthful of paper.

An outstanding character is Sir Jasper Fidget (Dan Reinehr). He plays a large, totally absurd gentleman who forces his wife to be with the eunuch.

His characterization adds to the comedy and entertainment of the play. His laugh is a hysterical one that goes along with waving a lace handkerchief. He is consistently foolish and amusing.

Another fine actor is Ed Truitt, who plays Sparkish. He has a high-pitched French accent that rises in temperament. His actions transform the art form of the "Comedy of Manners" onto the stage.

Costumes appropriate

The costume of Old Lady Squeamish (Judie Braun) reminded one of Little Bo Peep. The rest of the cast's costumes are designed appropriately for the upper classes.

The blocking is well planned. In one scene, Horner is caught in an awkward position with Lady Fidget (Sherril Dienstfrey). They cover up by pretending to be tickling each other and naturally Sir Fidget believes them because Honor is a eunuch.

Dienstfrey's cover-up of her action is amusing and done in comic form.

The lyrics sung by Lady Fidget, Dainty Fidget (Louise Bormann) and Mrs. Squeamish (Paula Langdon) are updated a bit and add to a modern understanding of the play.

The Country Wife isn't a play that will make one walk away with new insight to life, but it will make one walk away feeling thoroughly entertained.



Photo by Ted Kirk

Roger Nelson as Mr. Pinchwife plays the jealous husband of and in *The Country Wife*.

Special film series begins

The Sheldon Film Theatre is presenting a special four-part series of films called *Ways of Seeing* this week.

The films, produced by the British Broadcasting Co. (BBC) are narrated by John Berger, a leading, controversial art critic from Great Britain.

Berger presents his ideas on the "fine arts" in a satirical manner by juxtaposing great works with the visual effects of advertising.

Berger has said in the past that the camera and printing press have destroyed

the uniqueness and the quietude of painting. He said painting now exists everywhere. Its images are manipulated to suit the purposes of publicists and propagandists.

He said paintings are distorted and transformed by the medium which transmits them.

With this in mind, Berger said he finds ridiculous the atmosphere of false religiosity cast on painting by his fellow critics.

The screenings at Sheldon are free and will be shown at 3 p.m. over the next two weeks.

Music professor schedules recital of complex piece

Using a complex combination of a synthesizer, a tape delay system and french horn, assistant professor of horn David Kappy will present a piece, "Iron Lung" in a free public recital at 8 p.m. Tuesday in Kimball Recital Hall.

Kappy commissioned the writing of "Iron Lung" to a friend composer Daniel Harris.

"Iron Lung" will be played between installments of regular work on the recital program Kappy said.

Kappy and his french horn students will begin the show with fanfares written for the court of King Louis XV.

Other selections on the program include "Quintet in E-Flat, K407," for horn and strings, "Sonata for Horn and Piano" by Paul Hindersmith and a hunting horn suite.

Other professors from the school of music will assist Kappy at the recital.

They are Thomas Fritz, piano; Arnold Schatz, violin; Robert Emile and Ed Adelsa, viola; Priscilla Parson, cello; and Jack Snider, horn.

Kappy is with the Lincoln Symphony, Nebraska Woodwind Quintet, the Nebraska Chamber Players and the Omaha Opera.

He also works at KFMQ-FM radio on the Sunday morning classical program called *Patterns and Classics*.



A maintenance man puts up shelves for speakers in the UPC Record Lending Library.

UPC records offer low-cost variety

Review by Douglas Weil

Some of the album covers look worn and beaten. A number of the record jackets have seen more adhesive tape than a gift shop during the Christmas season.

And, yes, a few of the records themselves look as if they have survived a 40-hour week in a rock quarry.

But for the most part, the albums in the Union Program Council's (UPC) Record Lending Library are in good condition and ready to be checked out for student use.

The library is located near the south entrance of the Nebraska Union and offers a wide selection of music, including The Fifth Dimension, Elton John, Cream, Loretta Lynn, Andy Williams, James Brown and Herbie Mann.

To borrow records, a student must buy a 50-cent lending library card. The card entitles the student to borrow one or two records for up to two weeks.

The advantage of a record lending library is that students can borrow records for which they would pay \$5. For example, the record lending library is ideal for someone who is becoming interested in jazz.

There is one drawback to the library, though. It has a limited soul selection. This soon may be remedied because UPC has budgeted money to the library to purchase 12 to 15 albums a month.

UPC gives \$500 of its student fees allocation to the record library.



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