

Arts & Entertainment

'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

Play, like lovers, loses conventions of polite society

By Charles Lieurance
Senior Reporter

When the UNL theater department decides to do a Shakespeare play, it's hard to know what to expect. I mean, this is the theater department that gave us *Buck Macbeth* in the 25th Century, after all.

The department's current Shakespeare production, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," to be performed tonight through Saturday, also takes some liberties with the master playwright.

"This play does occur on this planet," said director Gavin Cameron-Webb. "But we've moved it up to the 19th century. Shakespearean actors, after all, wore the clothes of their day and except for

Shakespeare's histories, there is no accepted mode of dress for the plays."

Cameron-Webb, a guest director who teaches at the Juilliard School in New York City, said the play's axis is the conflict between duty and desire.

Theater Preview

"Victorians are emblematic of that conflict," Cameron-Webb said. "They venerated duty and order and sublimated desire. When duty is so rigidly imposed on a society, love will inevitably be perverted."

Of course, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is a comedy, so desire has to

win out.

"Love brings harmony to all," Cameron-Webb said. "And the lovers lose the conventions of polite society."

Nineteen actors are in the play, and one, Brent Schawl, is using the performance to complete his master of fine arts degree. Tom Umfred designed the sets, and Janet Stauffer designed the costumes for the production.

The play also will be performed Tuesday through April 25 in the Howell Theatre. Shows start at 8 p.m. Tickets for "A Midsummer Night's Dream" are \$8 for the public and \$6 for students, senior citizens and children. Fifteen minutes before curtain time students can get into performances for \$4.



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Lysander (Kent Lindemer) threatens Hermia (Roxanne McCosh) during a scene from "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

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