

Hamlet captivates gracious audience

Tammy D. McMahan
Special to Sentinel-Voice

A man questioned the significance of his existence. He struggled with the duties owed to God, his parents, his lover and himself. He confronted his imperfections. He looked at the face of madness and found that the face may have been his own.

Who is this man? Hamlet, the namesake of one of William Shakespeare's greatest plays. The Bard's magnificent tragedy was performed last weekend at the 13th annual Nevada Shakespeare in the Park.

Actors from the La Petite Musicale company performed the play at Fox Ridge Park in Henderson.

There's no easy way to summarize Hamlet due to the play's numerous themes, all of which concern the depth of humanity.

Among other things, Hamlet is a story of revenge. Hamlet's uncle Claudius kills Hamlet's father, the king of Denmark, takes over the kingdom and marries queen Gertrude.

The ghost of Hamlet's father appears to him and tells him to exact revenge for Claudius' treachery.

La Petite's production design was inspired by the abstract artistry of Rene Magritte. Artisti directors



Bill Mendieta (Hamlet), left, and Suzanne Nichols (Horatio) act out a scene during the Hamlet production at Fox Ridge Park in Henderson.

Gary Lamb and William Reilly choose Magritte for "the way he placed seemingly out of place objects into normal scenes."

Magritte's method reminded them of "how out of place Hamlet is within his uncle's court." Hamlet is suffering from overwhelming grief while others celebrate a new marriage. He is a man of conscience in a time of thoughtless barbarism.

La Petite actors provided captivating performances. Bill Mendieta's Hamlet had

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Gregg Daniel (Polonius), left, and Thomas Ashworth (Player King) salute the crowd during the 13th Annual Nevada Shakespeare in the Park presentation of Hamlet.

Photo by Ramon Savoy

Talent winners to get voice on wax

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Come one, come all — if you have what it takes — as a music talent competition will be held on Oct. 8 at the Doolittle Community Center, located at 1950 N. J St.

The event, which is being presented by the Cultural and Community Affairs Division of the city of Las Vegas' Department of Leisure Services and co-sponsored with Ragland Enterprises, is open to all musical performers.

Registration forms are

available at the West Las Vegas Arts Center, which will provide a piano, drums, bass guitar and amplifier for live music.

Pre-recorded tracks must be on either high-quality audio cassette tapes, CDs or mini disks.

Contestants must audition their material at the center on Oct. 2. Sign-ups begin at 1 p.m.

There is a \$10 registration for each contestant chosen to compete. All checks are to be made payable to Ragland

Enterprises.

Ragland Enterprises will award six cash prizes. Each winner will also receive two tracks on a compilation CD

produced by the West Las Vegas Arts Center and Ragland Enterprises.

Those interested can call 229-4800.

Harlem

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an outstanding Firebird, delicate and fluttering but a steadfast heroine. Kip Sturm and Lenore Pavlakos were the Young Man and Princess of Unreal Beauty.

The company will dance six different programs and end its two-week run with a tribute to George Balanchine, in whose New York City Ballet Arthur Mitchell was a star dancer before he retired to help found the Dance Theater of Harlem.

'Simon Sez' bound for cinematic trash heap

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A radical combination of the TaeBo video with a poor man's Arnold Schwarzenegger, a lame rip-off of Abbott and Costello and rejects from the film A Clockwork Orange summarizes the disastrous film Simon Sez.

With the aforementioned elements you might think Simon Sez would be one of those films that's so bad, it's good.

Bomp! Wrong answer.

This film is so bad, it's horrible. Allow me to be more graphic - it stinks like a fish market on a hot July afternoon.

The movie is a story of a "James Bondish" Interpol agent named Simon (Dennis Rodman) who is trying to save a kidnapped young woman, while foiling the plans of a madman who has a weapon of mass destruction. He's drawn into the whole affair by Nick (Dane Cook), a bumbling security guard for a super-wealthy computer mogul, the father of the kidnapped woman.

Along for the ride are Simon's assistants, two happy-go-lucky, high-tech, undercover monks. The monks are Brother Macro (Ricky Harris, host of HBO's Def Comedy Jam) and Brother Micro (John Pinette).

I think the makers of this film were just watching TV and eating some chicken wings one night when one exclaimed, "Hey, let's make a movie. I bet I can bang out a script before Hooters closes."

I really wish the guys would have just drifted off to sleep. This film is nothing but a collection of uninspired action sequences and terrible acting. Rodman is the star of this piece of cinematic trash.

Even the filmmakers knew that Rodman couldn't act his way out of a paper bag. He was generally given only three words at a time to speak. The other stars of this hunk of celluloid junk are no better.

Dane Cook is hard to watch because he's so incredibly annoying with his inane antics which include "getting Jurassic" and imitating Rodman's character complete with multiple piercings. He's the human equivalent of The Phantom Menace's most unlikable Jar Jar Binks.

No doubt the '40's comedy team Abbott and Costello are spinning in their graves because of the mind-numbing imitation by Harris and Pinette. Abbott and Costello excelled at physical comedy and wordplay like their "Who's on First" bit. Harris and Pinette can't touch them. Pinette is quite overweight and, of course, fat jokes abounded. However, they're neither original nor clever. Harris and Pinette made sad attempts at milking jokes out of the "monk thing."

Let's face it, if you have to try to get laughs from saying, "Go, Jesus! Go Jesus!" you better start praying.

Pradon portrays Ashton, a lackluster megalomaniac villain who's the British version of Quentin Tarantino at his self-absorbed worst. He's surrounded by henchmen with the bowlers, tight fitting zoot suits and strange makeup found in the film A Clockwork Orange.

The look of the henchmen isn't explained. I suppose the audience should assume that Ashton just likes the look. Pretend I'm Simon. I say don't bother.

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