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'The Diary of Anne Frank' *Salem Statesman Journal*

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday and Dec. 7-9.

WHERE: Building 6 Auditorium, Chemeketa Community College, 4000 Lancaster Drive NE, Salem.

COST: \$8 general admission, \$5 students and seniors.

CALL: (503) 399-2540.

"I think it's a clearer message. I personally find it hopeful."

Ted Desel Director

A franker Frank

The revised 'Anne Frank' includes previously withheld parts of the diary.

BY RON COWAN

Statesman Journal

"The Diary of Anne Frank," the story of a young girl hiding from the Nazis during World War II might seem an odd choice for a holiday season production.

But Ted Desel, who is directing the show opening Thursday at Chemeketa Community College, finds this venerable story appropriate to the season.

Frank, who wrote her diary between the ages of 13 and 15, had the conviction that everyone is good at heart and one should do positive things for people.

"I find it very hopeful," Desel said. "It's one of those lessons we have to keep learning to not make the same mistake."

Frank, who wrote the diary that is the source of this play, was in hiding in an attic in Amsterdam, Holland, from 1942 to 1944.

Her father, Otto Frank, who was the only attic resident to survive the concentration camps, obtained the diary after the war, and it was published in 1948, becoming a sensation that was translated into 55 languages by 1950.

In 1955, the story became a popular play written by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett.

But parts of the diary were withheld from publication because of their personal nature, only becoming available in 1998 and 1999.

That material is the source of playwright Wendy Kesselman's new version of the story, which is being produced at Chemeketa. She used not only the newly revealed material but also survivor accounts.

The New York Times has called this version undeniably moving: "The evening never lets us forget the inhuman darkness waiting to claim its incandescently human heroine."

"There's a lot more text from the diary that's read to us by Anne," Desel said.

"Most of the scenes we're familiar with, they're sharper."

The Van Daan family who are hiding with the Franks, emerge as more well-rounded.

The material that has been withheld mostly dealt with Anne's conflicts with her mother, as well as her emerging sexuality.

These are issues that make the material even more universal and timeless, Desel said.

"But how many young teen-age girls haven't had that kind of relationship with their mother," he said. "It was kind of a war."

By the end of the 25 months the family had spent hiding in cramped spaces, mother and daughter had seen their relationship evolve and improve.

This more complete version of the story should resonate even more strongly, according to Desel.

"I think it's a clearer message," he said. "I personally find it hopeful."

The characters who take refuge in a forgotten storage attic are Otto and Edith Frank and their daughters, Anne and Margot the Van Daan family, the parents and son Peter and Dussel, a dentist.

Also figuring in the story is Miep Gies, the woman who aided the Franks.

Dawn Kuenzi plays Anne, with Andrea Demas as her sister and Jared McClain and April Jones as her parents.

Peter Van Daan is played by Shaun Scales, with Jolene Gerlits and Adam Sprauer as his parents.

Martin Fogarty plays Dussel.

"The Diary of Anne Frank" will be the third production to play in Chemeketa's new 450-seat auditorium, which opened in January.

Chemeketa does two shows a season, with the second show this season being the musical "The Music Man," in May.

The program is still a one-man effort by Desel, a speech instructor who previously taught drama at Linfield College in McMinnville for 17 years before leaving in 1987. He joined the Chemeketa staff part time in 1991 and moved to full time in 1993.

Ironically, Desel left Linfield because of the stress in being a one-man department, which he is once again at Chemeketa.

But the reward is showing off Chemeketa's new state-of-the-art theater and the production possibilities, particularly with Meredith Wilson's "The Music Man."

"The community at large doesn't know what we have here," Desel said.

"That will be an excellent way to showcase our music and theater program."

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