USU Theater Review

INTO THE WOODS

by John Lennon

Cindy Ricker

The opening night performance of the tentative production of "Into the Woods" was accompanied by岛原山的Theater, is delightfully fun and riveting. The musical. The opening scene presents the forest home of a prince, a cottage, and a baker's shop. The familiar fairy tale characters reveal their wish for a child in the opening number. Cinderella, her stepmother, stepfather, and stepsister; Jack, his mother, and his father; and Little Red Riding Hood. Though they begin with their separate storylines, it is not long before familiar plans begin to intertwine in humorous ways. With humor, energy, and a sense of adventure, the full ensemble invites viewers into the woods with surprising passion and playfulness.

Some performances deserve individual recognition. I enjoyed the introductions in the first song of "Hush, My Little One" by the young German. Her expressive face and graceful movements added another dimension of meaning to the story, creating a multi-layered, richly complex musical. Mike Harrison plays two distinct characters: the Narrator with a deep, rumbling voice, and Cinderella's stepsister with a lighter, more playful tone. His ability to switch between these voices is impressive.

The play provides a clear vision of the Stephen Sondheim/Leslie Baxendale Lapine production that remained constant throughout. Several elements stood out in direct contrast. The play showed characters living life with the playful eagerness of youth in Act One, yet the reserved caution of age and experience in Act Two. The anticipated joy of "Happy Ever After" was balanced with the poignant counsel of "No One Is Alone." I was uncomfortable, at first, with the shift from frolicking playfulness in Act One to the problems of unfaithfulness and fear in Act Two. But if this was a prototype representing life's passage from childhood to adulthood, it again provided layers of meaning.

Go see Into The Woods. This show is funny, complex, lusty, weird, mourmful, searching, and passionate. Be careful. You might get scared. Or you might go into the woods and live happily ever after.