

Its a comedy, really, say producers

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Theater — Chehalem Players 2014 season opens with a comedy, despite how un-funny it may sound

The first play in the Chehalem Players Repertory Theater's 2014 season may sound disheartening, but Kym Herbst, CPRT co-founder, said it's actually quite funny.

"An Empty Plate in the Café du Grand Boeuf" opens Jan. 24 and revolves around Victor Bullard, an American millionaire in 1960s Paris.

"He owns a restaurant in Paris only for himself," Herbst said, as in the restaurant only prepares food for Bullard. The café is fully staffed and its only purpose is to fulfill his every culinary desire.

"After returning from a bull fight in Madrid something happens," she said. "The only thing I want is to starve to death at this table," he says."

After much pleading, the staff finally agrees to allow this.

"But he has to allow them to make one last seven course meal in the kitchen," Herbst said. "They bring out empty plates and describe it to him. Over the courses it is revealed what happened to him to cause such utter desolation."

In CPRT tradition, the second play in the season will be a drama and the third a classic.

"What we try to do is a comedy, drama and a classic. We like to spread them out," she said.

The next play, "Back of the Throat," will be more of a political drama and will show in April. The third, set for September, is "Our Town" and will be a little different.

"We received a grant from the Yamhill Cultural Coalition for that because we're setting it not in Grover's Corners, but are working with the Newberg Historical Society to set it in Yamhill County in the turn of the century," she said. "We took a spin on it."

This happened, Herbst said, in part because of the theater's displacement.

"Because of the (Chehalem Cultural Center) construction both us and Valley (Repertory) were displaced. The Masonic Lodge was gracious enough to open up space for us," she said. "It actually worked out brilliantly. The president of the lodge is also the president of the historical society. It's how we found the idea for 'Our Town.' It's a great and exciting partnership."

"An Empty Plate in the Café du Grand Boeuf" will run Jan. 24-26 and Jan. 31-Feb. 2. For more information, visit www.chehalemplayersrep.org.



by: SETH GORDON - Empty plate – Jim Halliday rehearses his role as Victor Bullard for Chehalem Players Repertory Theater's production of 'An Empty Plate in the Cafe du Grand Boeuf.' Bullard is an American millionaire in Paris who has been convinced to partake in one last meal before starving himself to death. Mimi, or Jaime Flatters, serves one of seven empty plates.

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