

DDA's 'Little Victories' shows struggle for rights of women

By Kitt Bockley
Staff Writer

The Department of Dramatic Art's latest production, "Little Victories," by Lavonne Mueller, is a powerful depiction of the lives of two great historical figures and their struggle for women's rights.

The experiences of Susan B. Anthony, a leader of the 19th-century suffrage movement, and Joan of Arc, a 15th-century village girl who led the French army against the English, are blended together in order to give a theatrical rendering of what these women were really like.

The production was directed by Adam Versanyi, an assistant professor in the Department of Dramatic Art. "I find this play interesting for a

number of reasons," he said. "We have a female playwright looking at war and what it's all about — both war in the literal sense and the campaigns that Susan and Joan are waging."

The entire cast of "Little Victories" was made up of students from the Department of Dramatic Art. Tracey Bowles realistically portrays the character of Susan B. Anthony, a woman of great strength and resolve, who is also highly sensitive and aware of her personal sacrifices.

As Anthony campaigns for the women's right to vote through the American West, Joan of Arc attempts to gain respect among her fellow soldiers in the French army. Kristine Watt was spectacular as Joan of Arc and depicted her character's determination and vigor with great enthusiasm.

Also notable was William Hoffmann who played a dual role. As Ben, Hoffmann acted as Anthony's potential suitor who offers her all the securities of married life. Hoffmann also played the role of Joan of Arc's paramour, Captain Lavour.

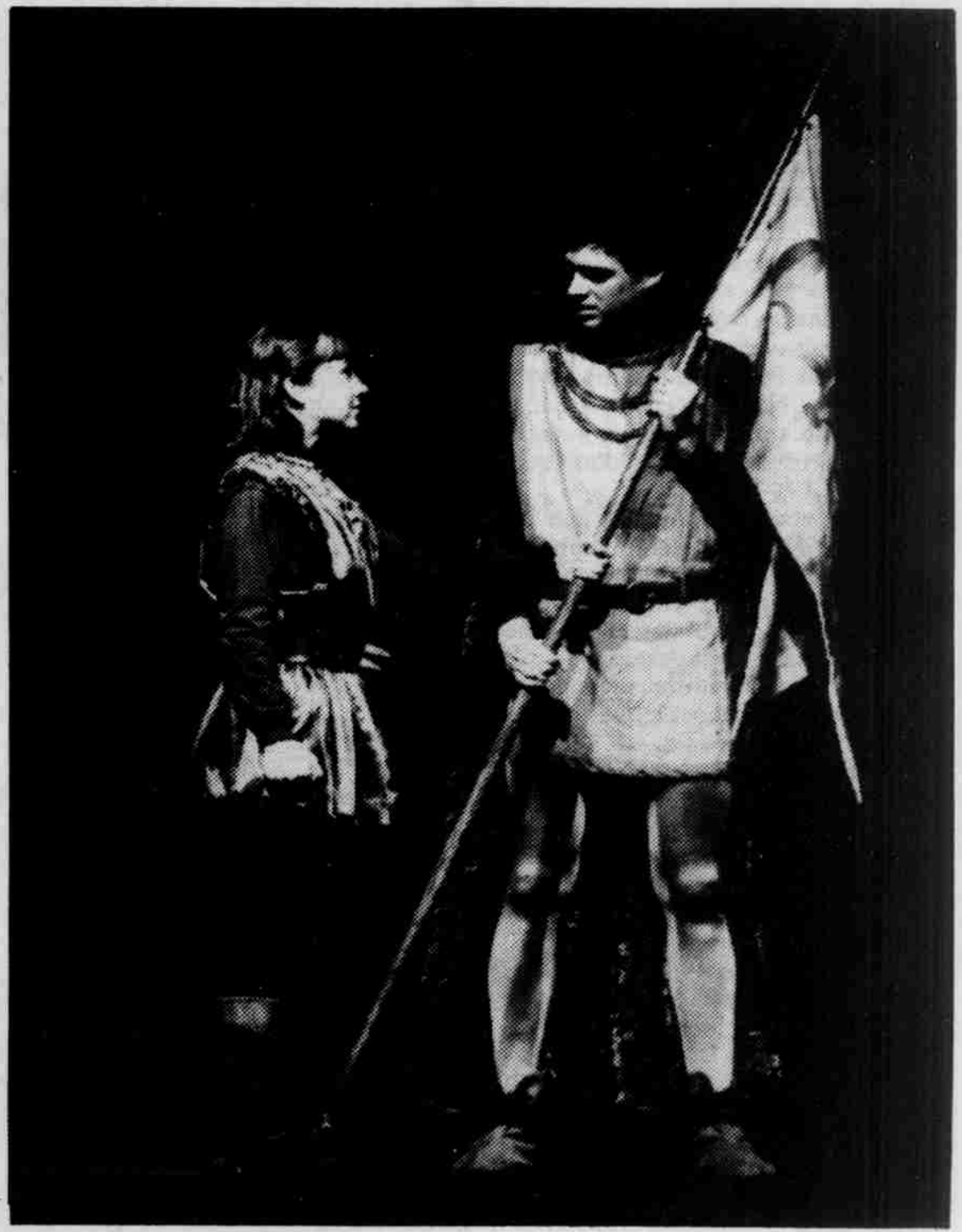
Despite the fact that these women are from two different time periods, they have much in common. Both women challenged the traditional roles of women, and refused to be deterred from accomplishing their goals.

"I chose to put Susan B. Anthony and Joan of Arc in a play together because they both survived in a landscape of men," Mueller wrote. "They not only survived, but triumphed, yet they died believing themselves failures."

Interestingly, both of these women's dreams were realized in the same year.

It was not until 1920 that women's suffrage passed, and Joan of Arc was canonized as a saint in recognition of her heroic actions in the war against England. This was 14 years after Anthony's death in 1906, and nearly 500 years after Joan of Arc was accused of witchcraft and burned at the stake.

One of the most unique aspects of this play is how Mueller allows the characters of Susan B. Anthony and Joan of Arc to communicate across time, and supply support for one another. In this way, Mueller helps integrate the lives of these two historic individuals and provides an introspective view of the nature of their characters. Most importantly, however, in "Little Victories," Mueller asserts the universal connection that all women have in their struggle for equal rights.



William Hoffmann and Kristine Watt perform as Captain Lavour and Joan of Arc

Public Enemy to boycott Grammy ceremony

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Taking Sinead O'Connor's cue, rappers Public Enemy said they will boycott the Grammy awards ceremony when it returns to New York on Wednesday for the first time in three years.

The band, nominated for best rap performance by a duo or group for its album "Fear of a Black Planet," said Tuesday it was angered that only the major Grammys will be presented on prime-time television.

The 33rd annual ceremony will be held at Radio City Music Hall and will be broadcast from 8-11 p.m. on CBS. Security will be tight for fear of terrorism. The awards were held the last two

years in Los Angeles.

Public Enemy supported a decision by Russell Simmons, president of its Def Jam record label, to skip the awards because of what Simmons called "the same old broken-record snub of inner-city contributions to the music industry," publicist Tina Wynn said.

O'Connor, an Irish singer who has been nominated in four categories, said Feb. 1 she was staying away because the Grammys honored commercial success rather than artistic merit. She said she would not accept a Grammy if awarded one.

The televised portion of the show usually features the major awards, including song of the year, record of the

year and album of the year. Most of the 79 awards are given out with little hoopla before the cameras come on.

"For the ceremony not to deem the contributions of rap music important to its three-hour televised broadcast ... is, in fact, to crush the dreams of many true rap fans," Simmons said in a statement.

Simmons also chastised the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences for its decision to showcase Vanilla Ice as a performer on the show, blasting the chart-topping "Ice Man" as an imitation of real rappers.

An academy spokeswoman did not immediately return a phone call. Telephone calls to Public Enemy also

were unsuccessful.

Pop singer Phil Collins had the most nominations with eight. The majority were for his "... But Seriously" album and its plea for the homeless, "Another Day in Paradise."

Quincy Jones grabbed seven nominations for his "Back on the Block" collection, making him the most-nominated artist in Grammy history with 76. He has won 19 Grammys.

Victories by Collins or Jones would mark the second straight year a veteran act cleaned up. Last year, Bonnie Raitt was the hit of the show with four Grammys.

Other top nominees include newcomer Mariah Carey and pop trio Wilson Phillips.

Doctor tried for incest, illegal abortions

The Associated Press

WILMINGTON — An 18-year-old girl told a courtroom packed with family and friends Monday that her stepfather, a prominent Sampson County doctor, had sex with her frequently and performed two abortions.

Eddie Powell, 42, a family doctor in Roseboro, is charged with four counts of incest, two counts of performing illegal abortions and one count of taking indecent liberties with a minor.

Powell's stepdaughter says the sex acts started when she was 13 and lasted until August, just before she left for college.

The trial was moved to New Hanover Superior Court because of pretrial

publicity and Powell's standing in his community. Powell had led several civil rights causes in Sampson County.

The girl has not been in the courtroom since last week, when she testified that she had made up all the allegations and then changed her mind, saying the sex acts took place. The girl had made a videotape saying prosecutors, social workers and law enforcement officers had pressured her into going forward, a statement she did not retract.

Assistant District Attorney Dewey Hudson called six witnesses before bringing the girl to the stand on Monday. An earlier witness, Barbara Burch of the Sampson County Department of Social Services, described how she and

her supervisor went to Powell's house Aug. 31 to ask him about the allegations.

Burch said that, over the course of an emotional three-hour interview, Powell said the girl had sex with him on three occasions. Each time, Burch said, Powell said he had come home distressed and taken half a Valium pill and drunk some vodka. He passed out on the couch, she said, and each time awoke to find the girl on top of him.

Burch said Teresa Powell, the girl's mother and Powell's wife, came home during the interview and blamed her daughter as much as Powell.

The first abortion occurred in the summer of 1988, she said.

Execution machine engineer to be tried

The Associated Press

MALDEN, Mass. — A judge refused Tuesday to dismiss the case against a Holocaust revisionist and execution machine builder who prosecutors say has been practicing engineering without a license.

Fred Leuchter Jr., who has published articles claiming the number of people killed in the Holocaust has been exaggerated, will stand trial May 9, Malden District Judge J.W. Killam III said.

Leuchter specializes in building electric chairs and other execution devices and serves as a capital punishment consultant to some states. He claims to

have an engineering degree but has refused to provide any documentation.

After the Malden Holocaust Committee began raising questions about Leuchter's background, authorities began reviewing his qualifications and charged him with practicing engineering without a license. The penalty for the crime in Massachusetts is up to three months in jail and a \$500 fine.

Leuchter vowed to sue the Holocaust Committee and other groups and individuals that he said "have sought to destroy my family, my livelihood, my life."

Leuchter's attorney, Kirk D. Lyons, said he would argue that his client was a victim of selective prosecution due to his controversial views.

"Only someone very naive would believe that if Fred Leuchter had not written his Leuchter report that we would be standing here now," said Lyons, who has represented white supremacist groups in Idaho and elsewhere.

Outside the courthouse, three demonstrators were arrested and an elderly woman treated by paramedics after a scuffle between supporters and opponents of Leuchter's Holocaust theory.

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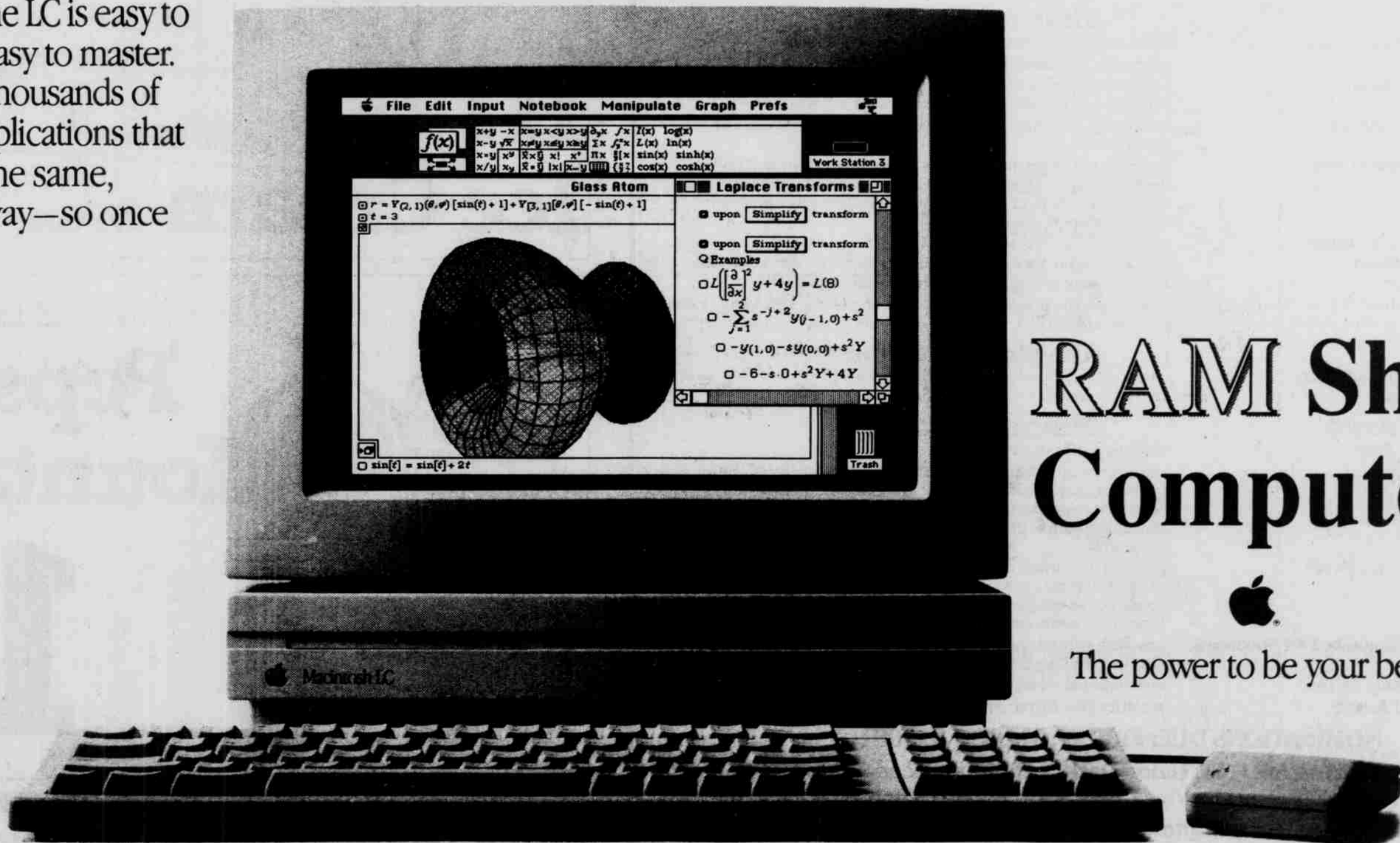
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