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'Opera' is no opera

Musical opens Thursday night

by Becca Gullion

When most people hear the word opera, they think of an elaborate musical production in which the actors sing in Italian and the story is impossible to follow. Webster defines opera, however, as a "dramatic performance set to music," and that is exactly where Meredith's fall production is: a play set to music. But "The Threepenny Opera" is much more than a simple musical.

The nineteenth century play which opens Thursday night and runs through Sunday, when a special afternoon performance will be shown for Parents' Day, was originally entitled "The Beggar's Opera" when it opened in England.

When the German playwright Brecht received a copy of the play, he rewrote it in his spare time, adding and deleting as he chose, while German composer Kurt Weill wrote the music and lyrics.

When the revised musical opened in Berlin in 1928, the public raved in spite of disastrous predictions by critics. "Threepenny Opera" played five years in Berlin, and broke similar records in a six-year run in New York.

What has made "The Threepenny Opera" such a success in the nearly 50 years since it opened in Berlin? The play's appeal can be attributed to the fascinating characters whose lives mesh in comical, and, often, heart-rending ways.

The main character is Macheath, a notorious yet likeable gangland leader. Although Mack is a thief, he is a thief with class, and possesses a strong liking for the obviously finer things of life. Mack and his thieving cohorts have an easier time than most London crooks because Mack and the Chief of Police, "Tiger" Brown, are old friends, and Brown conveniently looks the other way when Mack does wrong.

To keep things in the family, Macheath has long since married Tiger's daughter Lucy. This first marriage, however, has not deterred Mack from becoming enamoured with and proposing to Miss Polly Peachum, daughter of Mr. J.J. Peachum. Mack and Polly marry in a deserted stable, surrounded by Mack's crooked friends and Tiger Brown.

Polly's parents are distressed to learn of her marriage to the thief. Mr. Peachum, who owns and operates "The Beggar's Friend," a shop which outfits beggars in appropriate attire that will achieve their pan-handling ends, is especially upset.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Peachum do not approve of Mack, Mr. Peachum begins to plot his downfall. Peachum contacts Mack's woman friends at the local brothel and relates the events of Macheath's second marriage. Feeling betrayed, the girls conspire against their old

friend, and one of them, Jenny Diver, turns Mack in to the police.

There follows a touching and comical meeting between Lucy and Polly, both of Mack's wives, at the jail where Mack is being held. Lucy Brown helps him to escape, although Mack is captured again.

All of the drama is accentuated with Kurt Weill music to suit all tastes and which touches all topics. There are songs about love and about jealousy; songs about the good old happy days and songs about losing innocence in the modern world. The lyrics round-out the diverse assortment of characters and betray their innermost thoughts to all who watch and listen.

What happens to the notorious Macheath? Will he escape the law a second time, or will he, as his enemies hope, be hung? What of his bigamous relationship with Lucy and Polly? Who gets Macheath in the end?

Only the audience in Jones Auditorium, caught up in the music and drama of London in the 1830's, vicariously experiencing the joy of Polly, the jealousy of Lucy, and the pain of Jenny, will be able to answer the questions of this opera that is not really an opera.

"The Threepenny Opera" will run Oct. 6, 7 and 8 at 8 p.m. in Jones Auditorium. Admission is \$3.50 for adults and \$1.50 for students.



Roy Dicks, Lynn Dyson, Amy Cole, Teresa Duncan and Karen Mangum rehearse a scene from "The Threepenny Opera."

Parents' Day set

by Leslie Cross

Parents, husbands and other relatives of Meredith students will be special guests of the college when Meredith observes Parents' Day Sunday, Oct. 9.

Activities scheduled include a student-led worship service at 11 a.m., including vocal music by the Meredith College Chorus. Mrs. Jane Sullivan, instructor of music at Meredith, will direct the group.

A picnic luncheon at 12 noon and an evening banquet will follow.

Those who arrive on Saturday, Oct. 8, can attend the Meredith fall drama production, "The Threepenny Opera" at 8 p.m. in Jones Auditorium.

Parents' Day was founded in 1975 by the Parents' Association, which provides a second opportunity for campus visitation in the spring when it sponsors Parents' Weekend.

Meredith, Raleigh's Junior League sponsor community board seminar

A one-day workshop focusing on the needs of Raleigh and Wake County residents serving as members of volunteer boards was held Tuesday, Oct. 4, in the Kresge Auditorium of the Cate Center from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Following the welcome at 9:30 a.m. by Junior League President Mrs. Marsden B. deRosset, a panel on "Being An Effective Board Member" was presented by Dr. John Weems, Meredith College president; Mrs. C. Gordon Maddrey, past president of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. Harry K. Clark, II, past president of the Junior League of Raleigh; and Thomas W.

Jordan, chairman, The United Way of Wake County.

At 10:30 a.m. Sherwood H. Smith, Jr., president of Carolina Power and Light Co., spoke on "Legal Obligations and Responsibilities of the Volunteer Board Member," followed by "Fund Raising and the Volunteer Agency," presented by Peden Steel Co. President James M. Peden, Jr.

The topic for the luncheon session at 12 noon was "Public Service: Building a Society that Embraces Every Individual." Leading the discussion was Luther H. Hodges, Jr., former chairman of the board of North Carolina National Bank.

Betty H. Wiser, executive director of the Wake County Council on Aging, spoke on "Board Organization and Management." Meredith Vice President for Student Development, Dr. Sandra C. Thomas, on a year's leave of absence to serve as executive director for the Office of Citizens Affairs in the Governor's Office presented the overview and summary remarks.

Dr. Rosalie P. Gates, director of the continuing education enrichment curriculum at Meredith, coordinated the workshop. Serving as consultant was Molly Crowell of the Junior League education committee.

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Acteens view fashion show

Twenty-five students presented a fashion show for the visiting Acteens in Weatherspoon gymnasium on Saturday, Sept. 24.

Kathy Keith, a junior home economics and business major, coordinated and commented the show, with Mrs. Susan Meadows serving

as faculty advisor.

Each participant made the outfit which she modeled in the show sponsored by the home economics department. Spanish club shows slides

La Tertulia Spanish club invites all students to the October meeting to be held on Monday, Oct. 10, at 7 p.m. in the Joyner lounge. The

program will feature a slide presentation of Peru.

Crafts demonstration to be held

Home economics majors and those interested in joining the home economics club will meet on Friday, Oct. 14, at 10 a.m. in the Hunter home economics parlor.

Ms. Pat Brewer, who is associated with the Mouse and Mushroom craft store at North Hills shopping center, will give a crafts demonstration.

Home economics majors can get ideas for making crafts for the bazaar in November.

Courses in literature and history begin

Three enrichment courses in history and literature will begin October 4 and 11 at Meredith College as part of the college's continuing education program.

"Unique Women in Fiction" will be based on novels by John Fowles, Sarton, Sinclair Lewis, Edith Wharton, and Virginia Woolf. The course will be taught on Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, October 4 to November 29. Phyllis A. Peacock, retired chairman of the English department at Broughton High School, will be the instructor.

Also offered October 4 to November 29 is "The Revolutionary Experience in North Carolina," an examination of North Carolina in the era of the American Revolution. Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, historical publications editor with the State Division of Archives and History will teach the course on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Beginning October 11 is "Obscenity and Politics in Ancient Greece: Four Comedies of Aristophanes," a discussion about the role of comedy in public life. The course is offered on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and will run to December 6. Dr. Susanne H. Freund, who taught for 18 years in the foreign language department at Meredith, will be the instructor.

Enrichment courses are open to both men and women. For further information, call the Office of Continuing Education at Meredith College, 833-6461, extension 353, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.