

Madwoman of Chaillot comes to MCT

By Patricia Sousa | Posted: Thursday, May 28, 2015 4:03 pm

Mountain Community Theater's rendition of "The Madwoman of Chaillot" — a classic tale of good versus evil with an eccentric twist — will open this Friday at Park Hall.

Jean Giraudoux wrote the show in 1942 during the period when Nazis occupied Paris, and it is based around the struggle between greedy money-hungry corporations that made up the one percent, and the free-thinking, artistic, madwomen, commoners, and vagabond's that comprised the remaining 99 percent.

Director and Set Designer Kylan Thureockes, said that the play was written when the Nazis were planning to tear Paris to the ground, to ultimately create a city devoid of artists, musicians, and any other's that might distract from the goal of pure industrialization.

"We have these people that are iconic in the play — they actually don't really have names — the president, the baron, the prospector, the broker — they represent the iconic one percent," he said.

Michael LaMere, who is playing the role of the president, said that his character is all about the money and power.

"The President is basically bent on building more companies and building up his own strength in the world, and that is his only singular focus," LaMere said. "He doesn't care how he does it, he just wants to make money."

On the other end of the spectrum are the madwomen, who have their own perception of reality, Thureockes said. They have the courage and conviction to assemble the other like-minded locals and vagabonds to wage war against those who want to take away freedom of expression.

Lizz Hodgin plays the lead madwoman Countess Aurelia — the Madwoman of Chaillot.

"I think there is a wonderful relationship behind the women and they are very strong characters, which is always fun to play an interesting, strong character, but really my life has been filled with interesting strong characters and so I feel right at home," she said.

The Rag-Picker, played by Shane Johnson, is a recycler of sorts, who has observed the one percent by what they throw away.



Madwoman of Chaillot

Michael LaMere (left to right) as the President, Jackson Wolffe as a Prospector, Scott Kravitz as the Baron and Gary Edwards as the Broker, in a scene from the Mountain Community Theater's production of Jean Giraudoux' play 'Madwoman of Chaillot'.

“So he has gotten to know these people even though they know nothing about him, none of them would recognize him on sight, and so he is pretty bitter toward them for what they’ve got, and it seems from the rag-picker’s point-of-view it’s nothing they want to share,” Johnson said.

According to Thureockes, the Rag-Picker is a pivotal role that leads the 99 percent to take up arms against the evil one percent.

“The writing is fantastic and the story is unbelievably pertinent to a number of hot button topics that are happening right now,” said Hodgin.

Some modern environmental concerns are explored that are still prominent to this day.

“They are willing to destroy Paris, to drill under it and let it collapse because they find oil,” Thureockes said.

Although the content may seem a bit heavy, the show is designed to be satirical and comedic as well.

“For such a dark topic, it’s incredibly funny, I find myself laughing out loud when I know it’s coming,” said Assistant Director Darrie Young.

The audience is invited to attire in steam punk to fit in with the second act of the play.

The Madwoman of Chaillot will run from May 29 through June 14. Tickets and show times are available at mctshows.org or brownpapertickets.com