

Local

Scenery, costumes enhance production

By KATHY O'CONNELL

Battalion Staff
As the stage lights dimmed and the audience hushed, the orchestra began playing quick plucky music that slowly built into a crescendo as the curtain rose.

The half-lit stage, designed to look like the forests of Northern Europe, created a mood of curiosity as the opening scene of the Houston Ballet's production of "Peer Gynt" began.

"Peer Gynt," sponsored by the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society, is based on the Norwegian fantasy play by Henrik Isben.

The story line follows the life of a careless, happy-go-lucky womanizer who encounters a series of unfulfilled romances.

It also is the typical boy-meets-girl-and-falls-in-love story. She waits for him as he romances with a newly married woman, a forest nymph, a stuffy American benefactress, a seductive Egyptian dancer and a beautiful madwoman.

Imagination was the key to this ballet and it was evident as the stage of Rudder Auditorium was transformed into a raging sea, a gloomy forest and a sultry desert.

At various scenes throughout the play, the corps de ballet was costumed in everything from plain townsmen to trolls, ghouls and 1840s Egyptian bodyguards.

The audience chuckled at the two camels, which were actually costumed dancers.

Perhaps the most beautiful and tender scene in the ballet was the reunion of Peer, played by William Pizzuto, and his true love Solveig, played by Katie King, after Peer had been chased out of town for stealing the bride.

The audience applauded enthusiastically as the couple completed a pas de deux — a dance for two people — with grace and finesse.



Photo by Dave Einsel

Peer Gynt, played by William Pizzuto, teases his mother, Aase, played by Susan Smith, in a performance by the Houston Ballet last night in Rudder Auditorium.

The pas de deux is an essential part of classical ballet. Special moods are created through setting and music to enhance the skill and beauty of the dancers.

The relationship between the male and female performers is built up throughout the ballet to arouse the emotions of the audi-

ence. A ballet without a pas de deux is like an orchestra without a violin. It adds the final touch to create harmony and unity.

Most stories end happily ever after, and this is no exception. However, the performers weren't the only ones who had a warm feeling inside their hearts as the curtain fell.

Review

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Adding new courses drawn out procedure

By GRETCHEN RATLIFF

Battalion Reporter
Getting courses approved for the Texas A&M University catalog can require as many steps as a student takes to register for those courses.

Dr. Charles McCandless, associate vice president for academic affairs, said the process starts within the academic department where faculty members want to add the new course.

McCandless said the process generally takes between one and two years, depending on the scheduling of committee meetings and the publishing date of the catalog.

The course has to fit into the scope of Texas A&M — what courses the University is and isn't authorized to offer, he said. For example, fine arts and home economics are courses that Texas A&M is not authorized to offer, McCandless said.

"For the last two years, we have made an effort to purge courses that are infrequently taught from the inventory," McCandless said.

He said the University has removed more courses than it has added in recent years, which is unusual. He said this makes it easier to get new courses approved by the Coordinating Board.

The procedure of dropping a course from the curriculum is similar to that of adding a new course; both procedures begin in the particular academic department.

The academic department

wanting to add a course may or may not have a curriculum committee. If it does, the committee reviews the request for the new course. If approved, it is sent to the dean of that college, who reviews it and decides whether the use of college resources for teaching the course is justified.

From there, the proposal is sent to the University Curriculum Committee which reviews all proposed courses and curricula for their contributions to University objectives.

He said if it is a graduate course, it must also be reviewed by a graduate curriculum committee.

Assuming that the new course is approved by the curriculum committee, it is sent to the University's Academic Program Council. McCandless said this council primarily comprises the college deans, the vice president of academic affairs and the dean of faculty.

Dr. J.M. Prescott, vice president for academic affairs, presents the proposed course to the council.

The Academic Program Council also studies the request, and, if approved, it is sent to the Coordinating Board for State Colleges and Universities. The board has the final say on whether the proposed course will be added.

The governor appoints members to the coordinating board, which reviews the requests for new courses by all public-supported institutions.

Coordinating Board staff members make the preliminary review, and pass the proposal to the board for approval, McCandless said. Because the board meets once every other month, McCandless said, its decision on the request may take three months. If the course is approved, it will then be offered in the University catalog.



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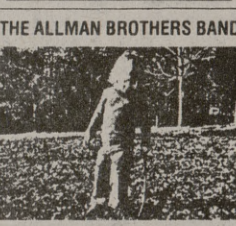
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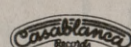
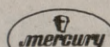
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