

001-1987
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Laurier's annual festival
to take a look at gender

Gender in the '80s is the theme for Festival Laurier 1987, to be held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, from Jan. 25 to 31.

An , exploration of gender, both in the arts and the world around us, the festival will include theatre shows, art exhibits, film screenings, and academic conferences.

The Festival Laurier committee, which sponsored Festival Japan last year and the Arthurian Festival previous to that, is currently chaired by Dr. Michael Ballin, professor of English at Laurier.

Ballin said the festival will be "the ideal setting in which we can celebrate our new and liberating perceptions of our gender roles. We can promote new awareness of the significance of gender, whether we are old or young, male or female."

Aside from the many special events that are a part of Festival Laurier, there is an "open-university" atmosphere added this year. To facilitate this, many faculty members have opened their classes to the public and will be delivering special lectures, geared to the gender theme during festival week.

Gender in the '80s will officially start with a reception in the university's Paul Martin Centre at 6:30 p.m., January 25.

The opening reception celebrates the beginning of a week of festivities and opens "On and Off the wall," an art exhibit which combines Cindy McMenemy's "A Gathering" and Michael Manson's "It's Only Rock and Roll: Part II."

McMenemy's work is a gathering of sculptured, archetypal male and female forms which will be placed on the floor of the reception room. Manson's large canvasses, showing male-female relationships in acrylic, will hang on the outer walls. This exhibit will be open for public viewing Monday and Tuesday as well.

After the opening reception has begun, participants are invited to a popular film festival in lecture Room 1E1 of the arts building, featuring Tootsie, Mr. Mom, and Victor-Victoria, contemporary films which look at the gender issue.

Earlier in the afternoon on Jan. 25 there will be an offering for children by Inner Stage of Toronto when they present their version of Peter Pan. This one-hour play about the little boy who never grew up is a wonderful introduction to the gender issue for children from Kindergarten to Grade Six. This show will take place in the Torque Room.

On Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. in 1E1, Dr. Richard Walsh, professor of psychology at WLU, will present an evening of socio-drama, with the help of theatre students.

This combination of lecture and improvised theatre will look at the way various forces seem to be mandating a shift in men's traditional roles, despite personal, institutional, and societal resistance.

Singer Marianne Girard performs Jan. 27 in the Turret lounge of the student building, singing music described as personal, political, topical and exciting. Opposite this event is a lecture, "Feminism and Buddhism: Their Mutual Transformation," given by Rita Gross of the University of Wisconsin. This lecture, at 7 p.m. in Room 1E1, explores the relationship between feminism and Buddhism in a manner accessible to non-Buddhists.

Laurier's school of business and economics will present a symposium on the afternoon of Jan. 28. The topic will be equal pay for work of equal value. Starting at 1 p.m. in the Paul Martin Centre, the symposium will include panel discussions and audio visual displays.

Film buffs will be in for a treat that night at an arts film festival featuring the 1979 Cuban film Portrait of Theresa, directed by Pastor Vega and Entre Nous, a French film directed by Dianne Kuryf. Both films will be presented in Room 1E1, starting at 7 p.m.

Dr. Mary Stewart Vanleeuwen, professor of interdisciplinary studies at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., will present two lectures Jan. 29.

At 3 p.m. in the Paul Martin Centre, Van Leeuwen will run an informal discussion on "Self-esteem and sex-role development" and then at 7 p.m. in Room P1025 of the Frank C. Peters Building, will present a formal lecture entitled "World-views, Feminist Theory and Human Maturity."

As well, on the evening of Jan. 29, the Toronto-based theatre company, Buddies in Bad Times, will do an excerpt from its production of the comedy Drag Queens in Outer Space, written and directed by Sky Gilbert.

In this one-hour scene, the audience will see Lana, a drag queen portrayed by Toronto actor Kent Staines, use a slide show to tell us of "her" dream of being a famous movie star travelling Europe.

The department of sociology and anthropology will run a full day conference on New Scholarships in Gender Jan. 30, as part of the festival. Speakers come from both Laurier and academic institutions across North America.

Topics will include women in relation to film, publishing, pornography, and cancer. The keynote speaker for this event is Dorothy Smith of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, who will deliver an address entitled, "Towards a Feminist Methodology in Sociology."

Dr. Harriet Lyons, professor of sociology at Laurier, who began planning this conference last summer, said women's studies is a "new field of scholarship. I hope this symposium will lead to an increase of understanding on campus of this area of study."

Anyone interested in the conference should call Dr. Lyons at 884-1970, ext. 2640.

Finally, to end the week, student actors and directors will mount productions for Festival Theatre, to be shown in the Theatre Auditorium at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday night. The short plays include Bland Hysteria by John Palmer, The Tiger by Murray Schisgal, and George Johnson is a Son-of-a-Bitch. by Charles W. Smiley.

For more information on any of the Festival Laurier events or the open-university schedule, please call Ms. Laurie Anthony at 884-1970, extension 2278.