

# CSUH Director Brings Modern Vision to 'Medea'

By Alan Dye  
Staff Writer

Cal State Hayward's Theater Department will open its version of Euripides' "Medea" Friday, Oct. 11, at 8 p.m. in the Studio Theater.

Director Dawn Williams' modern

vision of the classic tragedy was inspired by her own experience as a new mother and by the horrifying case of Andrea Yates, who shocked the country by killing her own children.

"My initial reaction (to the Yates case) was horror," Williams said. "How could someone

get so depressed that they would kill their own kids? I was dealing with my own demons at the time and I was very worried about the expectations that seem to go with motherhood."

She explained that the Yates case, although extreme, really showed the contradictions and

double standards of maternal expectations in our culture.

Like Medea, she questions whether or not a woman's power is essentially her choice to have or not to have children. She notes, "A woman who has children but who still tries to pursue a career is stigmatized, whereas a man has no such restrictions."

"At the same time, a woman who doesn't have children is made to feel that she is in some way failing in her duty to provide a legacy, either for herself or a man."

In order to underscore the contemporary relevance of the play, Williams has chosen to have the actors costumed in modern dress.

Since music played a very important role in ancient Greek drama, she has also chosen a musical score consisting of African drums and Flamenco music to accompany the production.

In Euripides' work, Medea (played by Simone Taylor) forsakes her family, her inheritance, her community and culture for

the love of Jason. After assimilating to a new culture and a new way of life, and giving Jason two sons, she is left by Jason, who seeks to ally himself with the royal family, hoping to move up the political power structure. Depressed, rejected, and powerless, Medea questions why she so altered her life to stand by her man, and what power, if any, she has in society.

Resolving that the only power any woman has is the function and use of her womb — her ability and choice to procreate — Medea makes a drastic choice. "Medea" performances will be Oct. 11, 12, 18, and 19 at 8:00 p.m. in the Studio Theater.

An abridged performance is scheduled this Saturday, 2 p.m. in Hayward's Centennial Hall as part of the annual Greek Festival.

Box office information is available at (510) 885-3261.



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