‘The Odd Couple’ (female version) promises lots of laughs this weekend

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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If so, the Sun Theatre may be the place for you this weekend when the Gothenburg Community Playhouse presents the female version of “The Odd Couple,” written by Neil Simon.

“It’s hysterical,” said co-director Kaitlyn Clark. “This is an entirely new take and it’s fun to see the feminine side of the original story.”

The comedy will be performed Friday and Saturday, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at the Sun Theatre.

Simon wrote the female version of his original play in 1985.

Changing the names to Florence Unger (Suzanne Holmes) and Olive Madison (Lorri Weiss), the playwright tells the same story of how two extremely contrasting roommates try to live under one roof in as much harmony as possible.

Weiss, who’s acted in many plays in the community, is also a co-director but said she did her part selling advertising before she took the stage.

“I’ll put in my opinion but basically I’m an actor once on stage,” she said. “The direction is from the floor.”
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In the play, buddies—who played poker in the original play—are transformed into girlfriends who play Trivial Pursuit. The lovely Pigeon sisters from England are changed into the classy Costazuela brothers from Spain.

Rubenthaler said an added bonus is Greg Viergutz, who played Felix opposite Oscar (Kevin Lutz) when the playhouse presented the original "The Odd Couple." In this production, Viergutz plays Jesus Costazuela with Manolo Costazuela (Devin Brundage) as his brother.

Other cast members are Trivial Pursuit-playing girlfriends Mickey (Jenny Daup), Renee (Mary Streeter), Vera (Khris Jinks) and Sylvie (Stacy Jeffries).

Directing the play has been fun for Rubenthaler, she said, because she gets to see visions come to life on stage.

"And they don't always turn out how you pictured them, sometimes they're even better," said the co-director who has directed and acted in several playhouse productions.

Clark is making her directing debut after acting in several high school productions and playing the piano in the orchestra pit during college performances.

She said she's enjoyed "this side of the stage."

"When you're acting, you have a very narrow focus because you're focusing on your character in your specific scenes," Clark said. "While directing, you see the whole story, the whole time."

Another highlight has been working with the cast.

"They're a lot of fun and the girls are a blast," Rubenthaler said, noting that cast members started rehearsals the second week of April.

Weiss added that it's been a long time since the playhouse has offered a good adult play with adult actors and humor.

"I think the community is ready for something like this," she said.

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