

## **Aristophanes' comedy, *Birds*, to be presented Feb. 8 and 9 at UCSD**

**January 30, 1997**

Media Contact: Jan Jennings, 534-0361

ARISTOPHANES' COMEDY, BIRDS. TO BE PRESENTED FEB. 8 AND 9 AT UCSD

The Aquila Theatre Company of London will present Aristophanes' comedy, *Birds*, at 8 p.m. Feb. 8 and at 2 and 8 p.m. Feb. 9 in the Price Center Theater at the University of California, San Diego.

One of the foremost producers of classical theatre, London's Aquila Theatre Company is noted for its fresh, innovative, and invigorating productions of ancient Greek plays. The current production of *Birds* is a contemporary translation for the stage by Peter Meineck. Performances are sponsored by UCSD's Department of Literature, the Classics Program, and the University Events Office.

*Birds* was originally produced in 414 B.C. in Athens during a time of social upheaval and civil strife. It tells the story of two ordinary men in search of a better life far removed from the hurly burly of the city, choking court laws, corrupt politicians, and endless war. The men persuade the birds to join them in the creation of a new city, and thus "Cloudcuckooland" is born -- as well as a comedy equally relevant today.

The comedic production includes energetic slapstick, witty dialogue and specially composed music. The *New Yorker* hailed the work as "the single best performance of a Greek drama we've ever seen anywhere," and the *London Times* called it "hugely enjoyable and very, very funny."

*Birds* is directed by Aquila's artistic director Robert Richmond. The cast includes Anthony Cochrane, who appears in the ABC mini series, *The Apocalypse Watch*, and is a veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company; Andrew Price, who appeared in the film, *Howard's End*, and acts in London's Royal National Theatre; Daniel York, who has performed for the Royal Shakespeare Company and BBC television, and Anthony Dunn, who performed in West End, Edinburgh's production of *Buddy* and frequently appears on British television.

Tickets for the Feb. 8 and 9 performances are \$6 general admission and \$5 for UCSD faculty, staff, and students. For information, call William Fitzgerald at 534-2279.

(January 30, 1997)