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The “Ironic” marriage of the vernacular sophistication of Shakespeare and Post-Modern “Green” recycled rubber

Santa Ana, Calif., February 02, 2006 - The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, one of the premiere theatre troupes of the Pacific Northwest, has chosen one of Rubber-Cal's sheet rubber products for use at one of their locations. One of the oldest non-profit theatres in the nation, the festival presents close to 800 performances each year. We see a bit of irony in the events choice in a recycled rubber product. The use of recycled rubber is a reversion to Shakespearean populism.

The term irony is derived from the Greek eiron (dissembler), and denotes that the appearance of things differs from their reality, whether in terms of meaning, situation, or action. That is, it is ironical when there is a difference between what is spoken and what is meant. If Modernity is symbolized by gas powered vehicles and their tires, then Post-Modernity is the obliteration and reconfiguration of these consumed products. We are certain that Shakespearean Irony, is in use here, since Modernity being a elitist philosophy has been literally “Shredded” (i.e. like the tires), by Post-Modern Technology in favor of more cost effective consumable. And heck, the past (Shakespeare) and the future (recycled rubber) are meeting in an ironic fashion, due to the disintegration of modern tires.

Irony is a best known as a figure of speech (more precisely called verbal irony) in which there is a gap or incongruity between what a speaker or a writer says, and what is understood. All the different senses of irony, however, revolve around the notion of incongruity, or a gap between our understanding and what actually happens. For instance, dramatic irony occurs when a character onstage is ignorant, but the audience watching knows his or her eventual fate, as in Sophocles' play, Oedipus the King. In June, 2005, the State of Virginia Employment Agency, which handles unemployment compensation, announced that they would lay off 400 employees for lack of work, because unemployment is so low in the state.

Since 1935, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival has been presenting Shakespearean Irony and other plays. The company has presented the complete cycle of Shakespeare's works three times: in 1958, 1978 and 1997. Their current season of eight and a half months will cover 11 works, and the troupe estimates attendance at around 360,000. The Festival won a Tony award in 1983 for outstanding achievement in regional theatre.

In the Pacific Northwest, rain is a constant environmental factor. While standard types of matting with drainage holes are available, this kind of product is not suitable for high-heeled shoes. Therefore, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival chose the Z-Grip, which offers a high degree of traction and drainage in a ramp application, but does not have drainage holes to get caught in. The unique V-Rib design of the surface channels water away while providing superior traction in high traffic areas.

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