

GILBERT

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way that we decided to get married."

She said the book is based on the time they spent in Southeast Asia after he was deported.

"This book takes place over the 10 months that I spent in immigration exile trying to get back into the country," Gilbert said. "That was before the big 'Eat Pray Love' money started rolling in, so we were living in \$10 hotel rooms for three months. During that time, I was trying to figure out what marriage is, and what it isn't, and what it has been, and what it can't be, and what it was never intended to be and what my place in it might possibly be. This book is all about those subjects."

During the event at Lipinsky Hall auditorium, Gilbert read an excerpt from her most recent

novel, discussing the difference between infatuation and love.

After reading the passage, Gilbert allowed audience members to ask questions. Of course, most of the questions had to do with her novel-turned-movie, "Eat Pray Love."

"I love the movie, but when people ask me if it was good, I tell them that they should probably ask somebody who it wasn't about. They might have a more objective opinion than I would have. I personally loved it, and that was a relief because I was ready for it to be anything," she said.

Gilbert, 41, maintained authors should not expect to have a big role in the production and direction of a film. She said while it is a hard thing to accept for some authors, it was easy for her.

"I always felt that the book had outgrown me and taken on its own life," Gilbert said. "It was like 'If you want to be a mov-



Katie Saylor - Photography Editor

Crystal Setzer and Shaina Livermore, both 27, of Hickory, show off their autographed books at the event.

ie, go be a movie,' you know? 'You're old enough to drive.' I just kind of sent it on its way."

Now, after all the success of "Eat Pray Love" and the publication of its follow up, Gilbert said she is working on a new and completely different proj-

ect.

"I'm working on fiction again, and that's the thing I'm most excited about right now in the world. It's been a long time since I wrote fiction. It's where I got my start as a writer, and I've missed it," Gilbert said. "I

can't say anything about it now because it's too soon and too nascent, but all I can tell you is it's about botany. I'm very excited about it."

In the question-and-answer portion of her speech, Gilbert gave advice to aspiring writers.

"Unconditional self-friendship is what you have to work on because you will disappoint yourself again and again and again with your work," she said. "The work that you come out with is a reflection of what you anticipated, but it will never be quite what you dreamed it to be."

Gilbert said success came at a good time for her, but that it did not come easily or quickly.

"The only reason I got here is because for a good solid decade of my life, I worked without any sense of a reward. I did it out of love," she said. "Love your work and then let it go, and whatever comes of it in the world is none of your business."

VENUE

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which means you can bring that hot chick or guy out on a date here, get them hammered and it's not stupid expensive."

Gray said he is proud to have the only theater in the Southeast that's doing all original work.

"We're not doing 'Annie' or

Shakespeare. We're doing all new plays. Everything we do hasn't been done before," Gray said. "We are in the process of rolling out all of our programming, but within the next two months we will have events every night. Mondays will be story-telling and literary events, Tuesdays comedy, Wednesdays music and Thursday through Sunday will be theater."

Samuels said one of the ways people can become involved right away is through a monthly forum they have called Magnetic Midnight.

"It's the first Friday of each month, 10 p.m. to play, 11 p.m. to watch, and its \$5 either way. The first dozen or so folks who come in with a script, or a song, or a dance or what have you will go on that night. It must be

original. That's the overriding rubric of the whole operation, and it can't be longer than five minutes," Samuels said. "That's the way I like to meet and interact with new performers. It's a development, I want to cultivate people. I want to meet them, I want to work with them and I want them to come play with us."

Samuels and Gray agreed there is some kind of force draw-

ing people into The Magnetic Field, both on the stage and in the audience.

"There's an energy in the café, bar and theater that strikes me as being very different from every other place I've been in Asheville, and I can't tell you that I understand it entirely. It just has energy, and it seems to be jazzing up the audiences," Samuels said.

BROOKS

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like to believe they're the kind of individual who would survive in a crisis when everyone else wouldn't," Carden said. "I enjoy the fantasy of it and the whole genre and Max Brooks in particular does realistic and

believable writing on the subject."

According to **Rebecca Levy, vice president of Underdog Productions**, Hillel, the literature club and UP spent \$10,000 to bring Brooks to campus to teach a creative writing workshop, give a talk in Lipinsky Hall auditorium and sign books.

"Basically how the school allocates its money to student organizations is you type up a budget proposal, propose it to the board and say everything you have to say about it. I figured if I could get another organization to help me with Hillel bringing him and not Underdog Productions, just because UP already has a lot of money to

bring a lot of people, then we might be able to get a little bit more money with the two groups combined," Levy said.

Brooks, the son of Mel Brooks and Anne Bancroft, said he did not expect a large attendance, and was pleased with the response from Asheville. He also said he would be happy to return if he was asked.

"It's a great little town, I love it. It's not on my usual beaten path," Brooks said. "I found out that Asheville was woefully unprepared for a zombie plague, way too many hippies. Which is wonderful, I think peace and love is great, unless you're trying not to be eaten. Somebody had to do something, that's why I showed up."

GARAGE

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"(The Garage show) was a smaller show but really fun, because everyone was super excited to be there. I felt a lot of love throughout the night," he said.

Another stage participant, **Asheville-based artist Andy Reed** said the Garage gives him a unique place to practice his art, live painting.

"What stands out to me about this venue is the cooperation of the employees and owner. They allow the artistic process to occur and provide positive

structure," he said.

Hart said part of that vibe comes from the Garage being a more underground venue, which means traditional methods of advertising are less commonly used.

"We advertise and compete for the limited Asheville music scene through mostly word-

of-mouth, social media and good old-fashioned posters and handbills. It seems to work pretty good for us," Hart said.

Morgan Splawn, a 19-year-old music business major at Belmont University, Tenn., said Wang's show was uniquely impressive.

"I've been to a lot of shows

in the past couple of years, but nothing like 'Mochipet' at the Garage. It was such an intimate show, lots of smiling faces and room to dance. The live painting and graphic design made it more than just a DJ set. It was like a growing, living organism of co-creation," Splawn said.