

trenches



KEVIN BRYAN/PHOTO ILLUSTRATION MAGGIE BAMBERG/GUILFORDIAN
te and Ted Wilkinson: Two of Guilford's Best and Best-Dressed at the PRIDE-sponsored Ball

Vagina Monologues educate and empower

Tim Scales
Staff Writer

I laughed myself to tears watching the Angry Vagina and hearing the "Quaker moan." I was moved by the pain of an Iraqi woman acid-burned by her family and a girl brutally raped by a gang of soldiers.

I was amused and angered, saddened and intrigued. I was absorbed by each story, and I came the closest that I perhaps ever will to understanding the minds and lives of women.

"I felt empowered after watching it," said first-year Julie Handy. "I felt a connection with women around the world."

The Vagina Monologues, performed on February 13-15 in Bryan Jr. Auditorium, contains stories from a wide variety of women and experiences, collectively giving a broad illustration of what it is to be a woman in our world.

Produced by Revelers, Guilford's student theatre club, the play is staged annually on Valentine's Day as part of the V-Day Organization's worldwide campaign to end violence against women.

"The motto of the V-Day organization is 'Until the Violence Stops,' and it hasn't," said senior Jeremy Eaton, who co-directed the play with senior Brynne Kirk.

The play is remarkable in itself as a dramatic achievement, but when looked at as a medium for social change, it is even more impressive.

"It was less like a play, and more like a rally," said cast member Melissa Marshall, a first-year. "It's just something that everybody needs to see."

All proceeds from this event were donated to the Refugee and Immigrant Family Services Branch of the Lutheran Family Services, a pro-

gram that provides childcare for mothers beginning or continuing education.

The directors chose this organization, Kirk said, because of V-Day's spotlight on violence in other countries. "We're trying to support women who have fled those situations."

This year, *The Monologues* raised nearly \$2400 through both the \$5 admission price and the earnings from a silent auction of art by female Guilford students.

"There are things that need to be done," Kirk said. "We will do them until the violence stops."

Each monologue was taken from interviews conducted by the playwright Eve Ensler, and each touched on a different facet of femaleness. Some focused on experiences by individual women, while others were adapted from common themes.

Interspersed throughout the monologues were fast-paced interchanges based on answers to some general questions asked of every woman Ensler interviewed.

"What would your vagina wear?" was one of them. "Combat boots and lace! A Mohawk!" were some responses.

"If it could talk, what could it say?" was another question. "Whoa, momma! Yes!

Yes! Rock me!" was replied.

This year's cast was comprised of 25 women, mostly from Guilford but including a few from the Greensboro community, ranging from teen to middle age.

"It was amazing working with these women!" said first-year Wyatt Scherm-Martin enthusiastically; she performed a monologue entitled "Hair." "We all opened up to each other and were able to share as a group different stories about being a woman. We bonded so well."

Eaton was similarly impressed by the cast.

"I loved to see how the women who are in it are transformed," she said. "I see them standing taller ... And I stand taller because of them."

Members of a.i.d.s. about AIDS, a student organization that works towards preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS on campus and helping local people affected by this disease, were present at the event, handing out leaflets and condoms to promote a safe Valentine's Day.

A representative of the National Abortion Rights Action League also attended, publicizing a march on Washington on April 25.

For more information on the V-Day movement, visit www.vday.org.



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(Left to Right) Co-Directors Jeremy Eaton and Brynne Kirk with cast member