

Theatre Preview: *Macbeth* opening tonight

Charlie McAlpin
Staff Writer

Theatre professor Jack Zerbe decided to direct *Macbeth* as an examination of the current political climate in the United States.

"We chose this play because we knew we were going to be immediately following an election season," said Zerbe. "It's not an attempt to equate American democracy with the political monarchy of the play. It's an examination of the psychology of ambitious rulers."

Macbeth tells the story of a man who murders the ruler of Scotland to secure the kingship for himself. He soon finds that foul deeds do not stand alone

and flurries into a string of evil actions to maintain his power. Macbeth, blinded by the false sense of security given to him by the Fates in

the play's beginning, completely loses his head and descends into brutal patterns of self-preservation until his final breath.

"It talks about leadership and the ways in which people assume leadership," said senior Paul Masters, who plays the role of Duncan. The two lead roles, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, are played by senior Brandon Sasnett and senior Heidi McIver.

Hoping to show the college how relevant Shakespeare can be, Zerbe and his team have modernized the feel of the play so the audience will connect with the themes. "People just don't relate to their own lives, so you really have to inhabit the



ELIZABETH MINEHART/SPECIAL TO THE GUILFORDIAN
From the *Macbeth* dress rehearsal



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text and make it your own," Masters said.

Zerbe is suited to the challenge as a 14-year vet-

eran of a Shakespearean festival on the West Coast. He has replaced ruffs and pumpkin breaches, kilts and

Capt. Kirk: Bringin' the funk on hot new album *Has Been*

Aaron Varnum
Staff Writer

Captain's Log Star date 2004: It seems that our captain has not released a formal album since his 1968 excursion *The Transformed Man*. But with the brand-new release of *Has Been*, William Shatner is back. He and producer Ben Folds have released a very energetic, bizarre, yet sincere album.

Shatner wrote all but two songs on *Has Been* and put his heart into all of them. Arranged by Ben Folds, Shatner's poetry is surprisingly good. He is aware of the laughing behind his back and caters to his critics by never taking himself too seriously throughout *Has Been*.

Shatner has always sounded a little ridiculous in his music, and this album is no different from *The Transformed Man*.

The cover of Pulp's "Common People" is a hilarious

opener that sets the tone for the rest of the album. Joe Jackson, singer of "Is She Really Going out with Him," makes an appearance on this song and throughout the rest of the album. Although Jackson's singing on "Common People" is limited to the bridge, it greatly enhances the delivery of Shatner by off-setting his reciting style of singing and adds melody to the song.

"That's Me Trying" is a song penned by Ben Folds and Nick Hornby, the writer of *High Fidelity*, and is an account of a deadbeat father half-heartedly trying to get back up with his daughter and make amends for all the times he wasn't there for her. Ben Folds and Aimee Mann ("Till Tuesday") both sing the chorus and make for a beautiful song.

Shatner's vocals sound heartfelt like the bumbling father who doesn't really know his daughter but would like to.

The real gem of the album is "Together," an almost stream-of-consciousness poem by Shatner over an amazing beat programmed by Lemon Jelly. The song

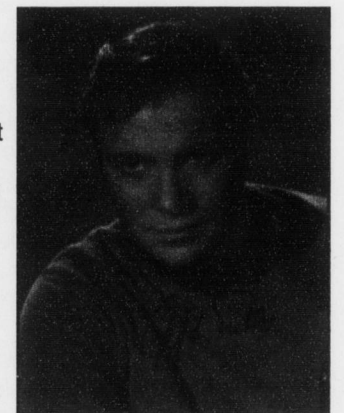
is greatly accentuated by Shatner's spiritual and loving lyrics dedicated to his wife Elizabeth. The title track sounds like the theme of a cheesy Spaghetti-western. Shatner takes

the goofiness and runs with it, turning it into a screw you to his naysayers, the people who haven't accomplished anything but still have the audacity to not give the respect Shatner is due.

Former Black Flag lead singer Henry Rollins stops by and joins Shatner to recite all the things that annoy them (what else would Rollins do) in the hilarious song "I Can't Get Behind That." The album is almost worth buying just to hear Shatner say "I can't get behind a fat ass!" The abstract guitar playing in the background is done by King Crimson guitarist Adrian Belew and helps the song keep the nervous mayhem that the singers created.

The real shock of *Has Been* is the Shatner/Brad Paisley collaboration on the final and almost autobiographical song "Real." It sounds like this song is Shatner's way of getting everything off his chest before he can't anymore. He wants to explain to his fans that he's just a regular person who has more to him than what is seen on TV or in the movies.

All in all, *Has Been* is a great album for the adventurous music fan and is a serious take on a not-so-serious person. Shatner and Folds have made a really good album that deserves a listen.☿



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