

Promethean Players succeed with *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*

BY MARCY PEDZWATER

NCSSM's winter musical opened Friday, Feb. 1. Each year, drama instructor Adam Sampieri and the drama board choose the winter musical.

This year they chose to perform the musical *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. The award-winning musical originally premiered on Broadway in the 1960s, and was brought back for its second Broadway revival in 2011.

The musical follows former window washer J. Pierrepont Finch, played by junior Simon Wolf, as he uses advice from the book *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and his own ingenuity to climb the corporate ladder.

The musical also follows Rosemary, played by Annie Jo Buchanan, a secretary at the World Wide Wicket Company who chases after the charismatic Finch.

Additionally, instructor Jon Miller narrated scenes in which Finch was reading the title book.

The musical featured many of NCSSM talented students. There were three performances of the show. The performance occurred at 7 PM on Friday, Feb. 1 and Saturday, Feb. 2, and at 3 PM on Sunday, Feb. 3. The auditorium was filled with students, parents, and community members eager to

see the musical.

The musical became a hot topic on campus. According to junior Alex Smith, "The whole cast really captured the maturity of the roles. I was thoroughly impressed."

The students involved with the musical have been preparing for the past several months. Rehearsals started near the beginning of second trimester and continued until opening night.

However, the winter musical is not the last of the theater department's programs. In the spring, the theater department's last mainstage performance of the year will be a Shakespeare play, although there could possibly be more additions to the newly-formed "Off-Broad" series in the works. The musical was a huge success, leaving students eager to see the next performance on campus.



The cast of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* poses in "Brotherhood of Man"

Courtesy of Zihui Yang

First novel *Mudbound* reviewed—a phenomenal debut

BY MARCY PEDZWATER

Many readers hear about great books from legions of loyal fans that will go to their graves ranting about how wonderful a certain book is. *Mudbound*, however, is not one of those books.

It isn't written by a well-known author, nor has it achieved great fame in the literary world. It is a book of a different breed: a rare gem I stumbled upon by accident.

Mudbound, author Hillary Jordan's first novel, is by far one of the best books I have read in the past year. I would give a summary of the action in the book, but the truth is there isn't much action. The story is told in flashback, starting with the aftermath of the death of Jamie McAllan's father.

Mudbound takes place in the early 1900s and follows the lives of the white McAllan family and the Jacksons, their black share tenants.

Mudbound is told in first person, rotating through different narrators from the McAllan and Jackson families. The story confronts the issues of racism, sexism, and

classism, but does so in a way that is never cliché.

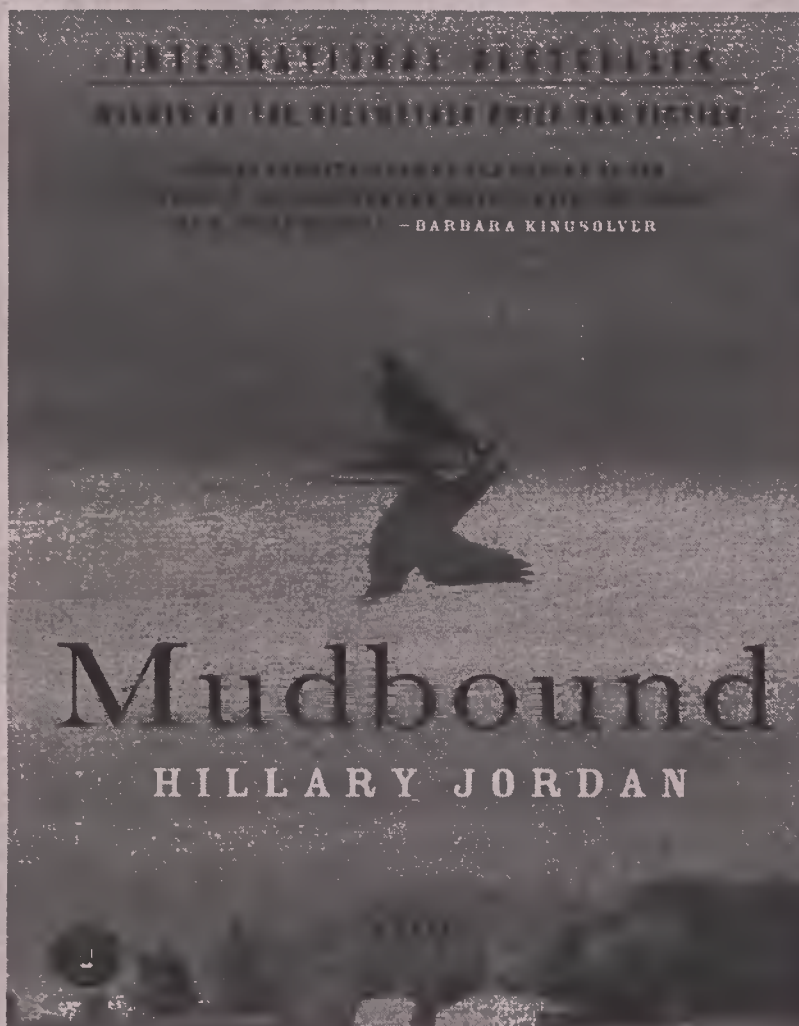
Moreover, Jordan develops each character beautifully, giving them a unique voice and complex story. None of the characters are perfect nor are they detestable, they are simply human, with both flaws and redemptive qualities.

The novel ultimately leaves the reader to decide who to acquit and who to condemn, blurring the lines in such a way that makes *Mudbound* seem like a mirror into real life, rather than just fiction.

The story is mostly character development, building up to a climax at the end. However, it is crafted beautifully, written at the perfect pace to keep the reader interested enough to keep reading page after page.

The story is unpredictable; as soon as I felt I had a glimpse of what would happen next, there would be an unexpected plot twist that would change the entire dynamic of the novel.

Besides, the events at the end were enough to make reading the preceding hundred pages not only worth it, but integral to the ending.



Mudbound, the novel which has won Jordan literary prizes but not brought her wide acclaim

Courtesy of RadiantLit

Like any truly great book, however, *Mudbound* reaches far beyond well-developed characters and a tantalizing plot line.

The book raises many moral questions, and leaves many of them unanswered, forcing the reader to continually ponder its themes, long after the novel's conclusion. Jordan finds a way to cover often overused issues in an original way, which lends the book a unique quality.

There is a sort of unspeakable quality to *Mudbound*, a feeling of satisfaction that comes from reading the book that can be neither quantified nor described. Hillary Jordan's *Mudbound* is a phenomenal debut novel that shows great promise for the young author.