

# Stallone's 'Over The Top' plot wrestles its way to the bottom

"Over the Top" is the story of Lincoln Hawks (Sylvester Stallone), a truckdriver who is trying to rebuild his life. Hawks is reunited with his 12-year-old son Mike (Robert Loggia) and wants to earn his respect, friendship and love while vying to be the world's best armwrestler. The film employs Stallone in his typical nice-but-tough guy role in the over-used theme of an underdog's struggle

**Scott Cowen**  
Cinema

to make it. These worn out elements lead to a simplistic, unimaginative, highly predictable movie. Stallone, who co-wrote the film

and plays its lead, once again shows that he is a one-dimensional actor. By portraying Lincoln Hawks, Stallone adds to his long list of macho characters (Rocky, Rambo, and Cobra), but unlike the others, this character is dominated more by love than violence. "Over the Top" is not as intense as "Rambo" or "Cobra" or as exciting as any of the "Rocky" movies, but blue-collar

similarities between these characters contribute to the film's downfall. Viewing Hawks without comparing him to Stallone's other roles is difficult.

Loggia's portrayal of Mike Cutler, Hawks's rich-kid son, is rather good. This is especially true early in the movie when he is the young know-it-all military cadet. This character

eventually thaws out, but Loggia's acting weakens in these warmer scenes. His performance most notably ebbs in really emotional shots, with the result being that Mike Cutler never fully captures the audience's imagination.

The plot in "Over the Top" is predictable, and the outcome will surprise no one. Because it revolves around a trucker, the movie even comes complete with a scene in which a tractor-trailer cab smashes through the gates of a mansion. The film does introduce the sport of armwrestling, but parallels with the "Rocky" movies are extremely difficult to overlook.

The armwrestlers are the most original and amusing aspect of the film. For the most part, they are crazed monsters with huge arms.

However each has his own way of getting psyched up for a match; for example, Hawks turns his hat around before armwrestling, while one of his opponents either eats a lit cigar or drinks a can of motor oil to get ready. The intense looks before and during the matches make these contests entertaining.

Menahem Golan, who directed and co-produced "Over the Top," does little to deviate from the formula that has made Stallone films so successful. Once again Stallone plays a tough guy who has to battle extreme adversity and seemingly insurmountable odds in order to succeed. However after four "Rocky" movies, this theme is no longer incredibly exciting or interesting, and the film's only success should come as an H.B.O. "filler."

## UNC Lab Theatre tells a tale by Shakespeare

By ALSTON RUSSELL  
Staff Writer

The ability to fantasize is as crucial to a healthy mentality as the ability to reason. Unfortunately, everyday life tends to smother our imaginative outlets. The Lab Theatre invites everyone to enter a fantasy world created by William Shakespeare in this weekend's production of "The Winter's Tale."

The play tells the story of an omnipotent king who corrodes himself, his family, and his kingdom through jealousy. It was written during Shakespeare's later experimental phase in drama.

Director Mike Wilson describes the play as "a large fantasy with fairytale kingdoms, flags, castles, dancing, and music."

"The play's about magic in the world, and we need more magic," he said. "We want people to get caught up in the tale."

Wilson chose this play because it incorporates both tragic and comic elements mastered by Shakespeare. "The play creates a controversy because the first half is tragedy and the second half is comedy," he said.

When comparing his production to the original play, Wilson said his version was "modern but faithful to the text."

Wilson explains that fairytales like "Alice in Wonderland," "The Wizard of Oz," and "Peter Pan" influenced the Lab's approach to the play.

The play's setting is the two kingdoms of Sicilia (Sicily) and Bohemia during the Edwardian Age (early 1900s). The drama travels 16 years in time, backward not forward.

The Lab production is a bit different from Shakespeare's version. The students have created their own musical score for this production and have altered the play's message. "The original play depicts destruction on different levels and then offers resurrection," Wilson said. "Our production says 'yes there is destruction' and 'yes there is resurrection,' but a sacrifice is made. We emphasize the sacrifice."

Shakespeare has not been performed in the Lab Theatre for five or six years, according to graduate actress Marcia Decker, who plays Paulina in the production.

The cast members said that they develop their assigned fictional characters by searching within themselves. "I find my own jealousy coming through the king's jealous character," said Roderick Cameron, who plays King Leontes.

Rehearsal for "The Winter's Tale" began in January. Some of the

original characters and scenes have been trimmed. Even so, a few actors play multiple characters in the production.

Props used for the play are minimal and thematically essential. They are either borrowed or supplied

by the actors themselves.

The Winter's Tale will be performed by the Lab Theatre Sunday and Monday at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Tuesday at 5 p.m. in Graham Memorial.



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