

ARTS and FEATURES

Beckett's 'Endgame': right up there with escargots and good sex

Along with hang-gliding, good sex and escargots, everyone should experience Samuel Beckett at some point in his or her life. The Lab Theatre's production of "Endgame" is a good opportunity.

The play is warped, bizarre, surreal and total nonsense. Yet something about it leaves the audience speechless, unable to voice any thoughts or objections. It's not a play about thought; it's a play about feeling, not emotion, but the sensations these characters give to the audience.

"The time is the end of the world and the place is anywhere. The action evolves in the minds of the two main characters, Hamm and Clov.

Debbie Morrison, who directed "The

Mondy Lamb Theater

Bald Soprano" for Lab Theatre in 1989, returns to the Lab to give her interpretation of "Endgame." Morrison, a senior speech communication and psychology major from Greenville, said the most challenging aspect of the play was the text itself. "Beckett is very difficult in the sense that he is off in his own world," she said. "A lot of things (about Beckett) are hard to understand."

Everything about this play is hard to understand if you take it too seriously or try to draw too much meaning out of the jumble of nonsense. The play is full of paradoxes. Hamm and Clov both love and hate each other. They want to die, but are still desperately trying to find things that make their lives worth living.

"The play is about tension because they have to be together and care for each other even though they are total opposites," Morrison said. "The two characters need each other to exist."

Throughout the play Hamm and Clov are playing mindgames, with each other and with themselves, waiting for their existence to end.

Beckett originally cast the two leading roles as men, but Morrison decided to cast them as women.

Aside from the fact that this is Beckett, another reason to see this play is Laurie Williams, who is outstanding in her role as the blind and crippled Hamm. Williams, a junior drama major from New York, said the most challenging part of her role was making her character's blindness believable.

She does more than that. She makes the tilted world of Beckett seem frighteningly plausible. In a play where none of the characters are possibly real,

Williams gives her character a soul.

Williams believes Beckett depends on personal perspective. "The play should be kind of an open-ended interpretation for anyone," she said.

Jen Davis, a junior psychology major from Connecticut, is convincing as the methodical Clov. She is constantly playing little games with herself in order to make the time pass. Davis provides most of the play's comic relief. She engages the audience with quirky little

games that only the audience and she can see.

The cast is completed by Tom Davies and Tamar Arslanian who are the only other creatures alive in this bizarre world of Beckett.

When the play is over, no one moves. There is complete silence. The cast comes out, everyone claps, then total silence. The lights come on, no one speaks, no one moves. People just look at each other. Pause ... pause ... silence.

Debbie Williams smiles from the second row and looks around. The play is a success.

"Endgame" will be performed today at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. and at 5 p.m. on Tuesday in the basement of Graham Memorial. Admission is free and donations are appreciated. Auditions for next semester's Lab Theatre productions are Dec. 3. Contact the Drama Department for more information.

Chainsaw Kittens set to rock Cradle Halloween eve

Brian Springer Concert

like the Buzzcocks and the more mainstream Sonic Youth, the Chainsaw Kittens play power pop with often twisted lyrics. Band leader and chief songwriter Tyson Meade (ex-Defenestration) gleefully layers clear, ringing vocal lines over noisy instrumental overkill for a sound that is as downright melodic as it is powerful. On the band's debut LP, *Violent Religion*, Meade calls up comparisons to everyone from the Beatles to Lloyd Cole to Metallica. But this is one band that doesn't borrow or steal — the electric whirlwind is strictly its own.

The Chainsaw Kittens have been together only a year and a half, but already

they're headlining a club tour. While Meade sings, the guitar tandem of Mark Metzger and Trent Bell spits out stinging riffs. In the rhythm section, drummer Ted Leader and bassist Kevin McElhane work to keep the others in control while holding down the low end.

From the hard guitar pop of "Bloodstorm" and "Bliss (We're Small)" to the quiet power of "She's Gone Mad" to the groove-heavy "Feel Like a Drugstore," the Chainsaw Kittens leave aural ambrosia around every corner. And they should kick the studio versions of the songs under the carpet in concert.

Opening up will be Raleigh's Vanilla Trainwreck, a killer band in its own right. VT is promoting a new single out on Otis Records ("Galvanized" b/w

"Picturing" — and, hey, it's on white vinyl) and has been featured on WXYC's *Demolition* ("Naked on a Train") and Mammoth's *frequeNCY* ("Please, Set Me on Fire"). Their sound is hard-driving electric college radio with a twinge of psychedelia. In short, Greg Elkins and company create burning rock 'n' roll and dance in the ashes. This will be one of the last three area Vanilla Trainwreck dates (they'll be at Raleigh's Fallout Shelter on November 2nd and Charlotte's Milestone on the 3rd) before they swing down to Georgia.

This is a monster twin bill that should even overcome the shift back to a one-a.m. beer hour. Whether you've lost your mittens or just thrown 'em away, don't miss this chance to cut a rug with a dynamite new band and one of the Triangle's best.

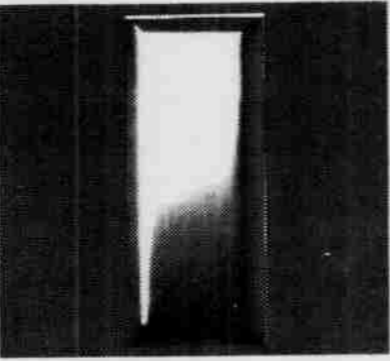


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New board game helps kids confront fears, cope with them

From Associated Press reports PHILADELPHIA — Remember hiding under the covers when you were young, praying the lightning and thunder would go away and leave you in peace? Or maybe bullies were your nightmare, or Halloween ghosts and goblins.

Today's children have the same fears — spiders and snakes, large green monsters and "the dark." But they don't have to face those demons alone.

"Not So Scary Things" is a board game that guides children through the worst visions of their fears, debunking myths and allowing them to gain some mastery over life.

The game, available in some specialty stores and catalogs, is for children ages

4-8 and their parents. It forces young players to imitate the objects of their nightmares and helps parents remember childhood perils.

The game "mirrors the way children learn how to handle their fears," said Dr. Neil Izenberg, a pediatrician and co-creator.

"Imitate it, learn about it, then master it."

As important as the child's reaction is parent participation.

"We see parents who inadvertently frighten children because they don't have the same fears," she said, using the example of a parent who takes a child to see a scary movie. "We forget what it feels like."

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