

Diversions



Staff Photo--Adam Brooks

More forums!

(A) Members of the cast of "The Chairs" rehearse. The forum production is today at 3:30 p.m. (B) The cast of "The New Play" get ready for their performance on May 5. This forum presentation is also at 3:30 p.m. Admission is free to all shows.

Forum review

Confusion can be fun

By Leta Parks
Staff Writer

UNCA students presented a bewildering picture last Thursday of the absurdity of war and violence in a Forum Theatre presentation of "The Elephant Calf," by Bertolt Brecht.

The performance left the audience puzzled and off-balance, which was exactly what Brecht intended, according to drama department chairman Arnold Wengrow.

The only way to approach seeing a play like this was to take the narrator's comment seriously; "For those of you who can't understand the plot, it's incomprehensible." After understanding that, one could sit back and enjoy the play.

There was a great deal of entertainment in the performance, in spite of the confusion. Imagine a group of

soldiers getting bored and putting on a play to keep themselves entertained.

The "audience members" seated themselves at different places throughout the arena. There, they jeered, cheered, sang, and joined in the play whenever they felt like it.

Meanwhile, the "actors" attempted to keep the "audience" interested, but their attempts were not always successful.

They found themselves saying things like, "We may have charged too much for admission," or "Bring on the dancing girls."

There was also interaction between the actors and the production crew to further emphasize the confusion. Actors would look up at the production crew after giving cues for music. Meanwhile, the crew would throw up their hands and run around, trying to figure out what to

do.

The political overtones of anti-war came through subtly as the soldier-actors portrayed the story of the elephant calf. "I intended to show the elephant calf was caught in a catch-22 situation," said McDonough Brady, director of the play.

No matter what the elephant calf did, she could not prove that she was innocent of her mother's murder, even though the mother was standing there alive. The elephant calf's tormentors finally drove her so crazy that she actually killed someone.

This was the proof of the elephant calf's guilt, according to this "inquisition." If this does not make any sense, remember the comment about the play being incomprehensible and take comfort in that.

The production crew, especially lighting, did an excellent job of interacting with the actors and bombarding the audience with stimuli.


In addition, Scarlet Bell gave an outstanding performance as Polly Baker, the narrator in the play. Her voice also shone through during the singing.

Brad Summers, as the moon, aided the narrator in portraying how nature was turned upside down by the violence of man. Also, Kevin Bryant and Gina LaMonda added vitality to the parts of the elephant and elephant calf.

However, the really winning performances were turned out by the "audience members," Kevin Dunayer, Brian Orr, Traci Ross, and Tanya Thomas. They took what could have been a small, insignificant part of the play and made it one of the most entertaining aspects of the entire play.



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