

# Features

The Blue Banner

Thurs., Nov. 11, 1993

## Play's 1970s premise relates well to the present

A Review By Lenora Fouts

Staff Writer

The first annual City of Dionysia Theatre Festival began Nov. 4 and will run through Nov. 14 at the Diana Wortham Theatre in Pack Place.

According to the series' program, City of Dionysia was established in the tradition of theatrical performances in Ancient Greece.

UNCA's Pisgah Players organized the festival. Under the direction of David Hopes, professor of literature at UNCA, the Pisgah Players will perform "Sea's Edge" Nov. 13 at 8 p.m.

I attended one of the 10 plays that the festival includes, David Mamet's "Sexual Perversity in Chicago." Actors and Company performed Mamet's work.

The play shows a humorous perspective of dating and relationships during the sexual revolution of the 1970s.

The story revolves around Bernie, Danny, Deb, and Joan. Bernie and Danny are close friends and Deb and Joan live together. All four characters are looking for a relationship but are unclear as to what the word really means.

They are searching for this relationship through different means. There seems to be confusion among the characters about the relationship between sex and love.

Bernie, played by Alphonse Hyorth, steals the show in his portrayal of a male in the dating game during the 1970s.

His polyester pants and unbuttoned shirt make him look like the typical guy in the 70s.

Bernie is the picture of a complete jerk when it comes to women. In his effort to find a relationship, he directs his search towards bars. His main problem is that he uses vulgar pick-up lines that would make even the worst pick-up artist look good.

After meeting Joan in a bar and throwing her a series of lines, she attacks him verbally.

"I do not find you sexually appealing," she says.

Of course, Bernie has a comeback to everything she throws his way. "Is that some kind of line?" he asks. "If it is, that's a f--- rotten thing to say."

It's hard not to laugh at the male characters in this play. They are so sure that women are attracted by their supposed overwhelming desirability.

In one scene, Bernie and Danny are at a bar looking at every woman who meets their requirements of having a large bra size and long legs. One woman meeting their standards ignores them as she passes by.

Bernie's explanation for her avoidance of them is that she's deaf. "Probably deaf," he says. "She did look deaf, didn't she?"

The only problem with "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" is that it contains an extremely large amount of adult language and situations that could offend certain audiences.

A large percentage of the play contains conversations concerning explicit matters relating to sex. This is definitely not a play directed at younger audiences.

However, the straight-forward language and discussions about sex are appropriate to describe the types of social changes that were occurring during this time period.

Although the sexual discussions are performed in a humorous manner, they make a real statement about the sometimes dangerous consequences of sexual relationships.

In one scene, Bernie and Danny are having one of their usual conversations about sex and women. In the conversation, they talk about how "power means responsibility" and are laughing about how sex can change relationships and make things too serious for men.

Although the men were using this phrase in a comical manner, it really stresses the importance in the 1990s of responsibility in sexual relationships.

"Sexual Perversity in Chicago" was set in 1976, but it provides a humorous look at sexual relationships today as well.

Another performance of "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" will be held on Nov. 12 at 8 p.m.



Staff Photo By Karen Brisco

"8 x 10 Glossy" is one of 10 plays that are included in the City of Dionysia Theatre Festival. The Southern Feminist Theatre performed the play Nov. 5. It will run again on Nov. 13.

## Sight-seeing Barry style

A Review By Vanessa Razzano

Features Editor

Anyone who has traveled in a foreign country or cursed at a car wearing Florida tags doing two miles per hour at the head of a 10-car-line-up will have fits of déjà-vu reading "Dave Barry Does Japan."

Barry, *Miami Herald's* syndicated humor columnist, employs his usual style in this chronicle of his family vacation in Japan.

Barry's skill, for which he won a Pulitzer Prize in 1988, lies in his ability to take images that his readers can identify with and twist them into merciless caricatures.

Sparing no one, Barry's descriptions poke fun at tourists and natives alike. But, for the most part, he focuses on the uneasy feelings he had as an outsider in a country that he says was not particularly welcoming.

Barry shows this discomfort when he writes, "Japanese tend to view us as large, loud water buffalo, lumbering around without a clue, tromping and pooping all over their carefully arranged, exquisitely tended garden of a society."

It doesn't take much to relate this description to the bands of "leaf-watchers" who traipse across Asheville, stopping their cars dead in the middle of Kimberly Avenue to marvel at the "wondrous culahs."

He points out, though, that being a tourist is not easy work.

During his adventure, one of the many things he had to overcome was the language barrier. "Japan is an extremely foreign country, where you can never be sure whether the sign on the door you're about to open says RESTAURANT or ENTER HERE FOR EXPRESS VASECTOMY SERVICE."

Even people who have only made it as far as Miami know what a language barrier is.

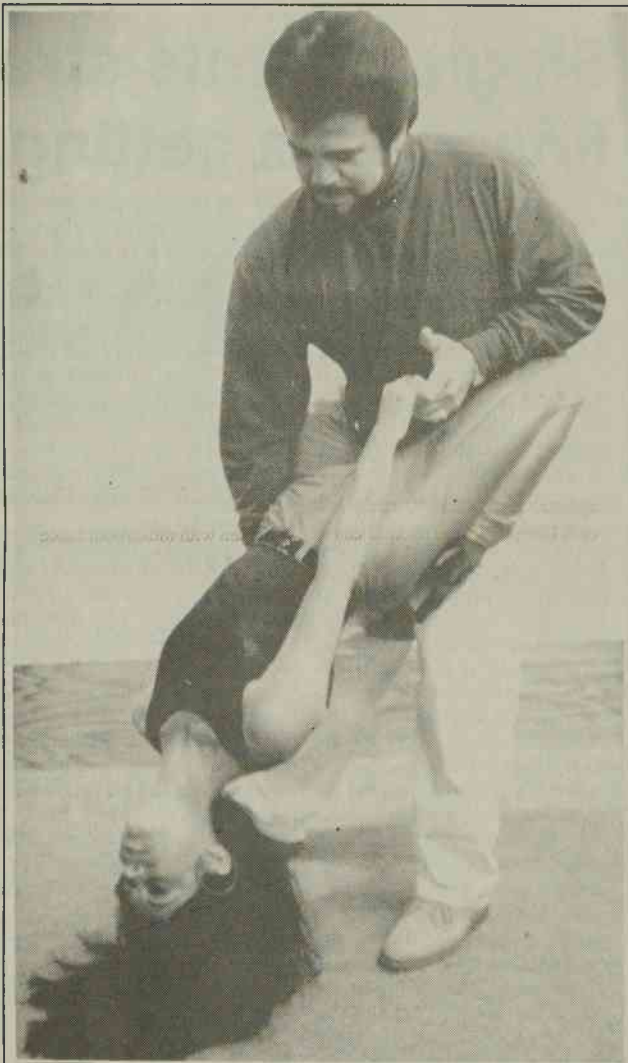
Not everything in Japan would be strange and unfamiliar to Americans, though.

Barry discovered that the Japanese "eat, sleep, and breathe golf; the only thing they don't do is play it, because to get on a course you have to make a reservation roughly 137 years in advance, which means by the time you get to the first tee you are deceased. Of course, in golf this is not really a handicap."

While descriptions like these will elicit smirks and chuckles, Barry fans should not expect this work to produce the endless chain of laugh-out-loud jokes that so many of his columns do.

Because it's a 210 page book, rather than a two column article, he spends a lot more time on descriptions and background information, producing lengthy breaks between laughs.

But there are plenty of laughs and even a few insights into the country he describes as "an exclusive club, and the only way to get into it is to be born into it, and that's that."



Staff Photo By Amy Lynn Eddins

Arriba!

UNCA student Liliana Castro and NC State professor taught salsa dancing at Be Here Now Oct. 30.

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## Burton film is not a typical holiday tale

A Review By Kim Sluder

Staff Writer

Producer Tim Burton's latest movie, "The Nightmare Before Christmas," recaptures the essence of the fairy tales we befriended as youngsters during the holiday months and includes inventive additions to the world of stop-motion animation.

However, "The Nightmare Before Christmas" definitely lacks the innocence of a traditional Rudolph story.

The film's main character, Jack Skellington, is a thin, stick-figure guy who is also known as the Pumpkin King.

Jack lives in Halloween Town, a community filled with singing and dancing vampires, witches, and ghouls and goblins of all sorts.

Most of these characters are proud of their holiday and the terror they conjure up on the night of Oct. 31.

On the other hand, Jack, who is admired throughout Halloween Town as the spookiest of all spooks, is saddened by the fact his holiday causes fear and dread

and is dissatisfied with his life in the town.

On a midnight walk, he stumbles into Christmas Town. Delighted by the lights, decorations, and the cheerful atmosphere in Christmas Town, he returns to Halloween Town.

Jack probes into Christmas literature and performs scientific experiments on decorations and toys, hoping to find the true meaning of the holiday spirit.

One of his tests involves a teddy-bear dissection, complete with scalpel and tweezers, not a typical element of a children's story.

Jack involves the entire town in the effort to produce Christmas. He even hires three trick-or-treaters to kidnap "Sandy Claws," so Jack can take over his job of delivering toys on Christmas Eve.

What Jack does not realize is that managing Christmas is not the forte of Halloween Town's citizens.

Though the toys are delivered, Jack's efforts to bring Christmas joy to the world are not appreciated.

His idea of fun toys, like violent dolls that chase and try to hurt the children, terrifies the kids.

To his dismay, his efforts are gunned down, literally.

People shoot missiles at him, kill his skeleton reindeer, and destroy the sled

full of toys that all his townspeople worked so hard to make.

The only downfall in comparing the movie to one of the earlier Christmas animations is the fact that it is intended for a more mature audience.

Though Jack and his friends are really scary to someone over the age of eight, smaller children might take the violent scenes too seriously.

While most of the characters are enduring, the idea of Santa Claus being kidnapped and held captive over a bucket of ooze by the loud and obnoxious Oogy Boogie Man may not sit well with the average first grader.

Although the plot may not appeal to some, the concept of stop-motion animation and creative imagery used in this film is well worth paying the price to experience.

Stop-motion animation works with D figures that are shot frame-by-frame. Each shot is done separately, and the figures are moved slightly to produce the effect of motion.

This film took over three years to produce, with approximately 100 crew members working to create 60 seconds of usable film per week, according to *Newsweek*.

Burton, who started his career as an animator for Disney, proposed the idea for the film over 11 years ago.

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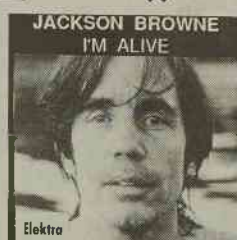
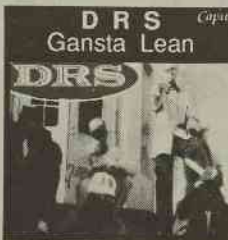
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