

# Features

## “Limonade Tous les Jours” uses mixed media to tell love story

by M. R. Vincent  
Staff Reporter

“Limonade Tous les Jours” premiered in the 2002 Humana Festival of New American Plays at the Actors Theatre of Louisville. The play opened in Asheville Feb. 3. Just when viewers think it dead-ends into melodrama, it blossoms into unexpected beauty by eclectic means.

“Well acted, but some of it was over the top,” said Lacey Haslam, junior art student. “It was funny, too, and that’s essential when things get so serious.”

UNCA’s own Rob Storrs, adjunct assistant professor of drama, co-stars as Andrew, a middle-aged divorcee who meets a young Frenchwoman Ya Ya (Mara Simmons) in a Paris café.

Storrs’ performance is incredibly dead-on. Facial expressions, hand gestures, even his sighs are fully realized and unforced.

Other than a solemnly delivered soliloquy by Storrs, Simmons gets most of the words in and even sings.

Thickly accented in French, Simmons speaks clearly and articulates all the right words.

“Andrew was great, but Ya Ya talked way too much,” said Mariah Grant, senior environmental studies student.

The set, designed by Kevin Palme, is minimalist, but the few props have value and meaning enough for the story.

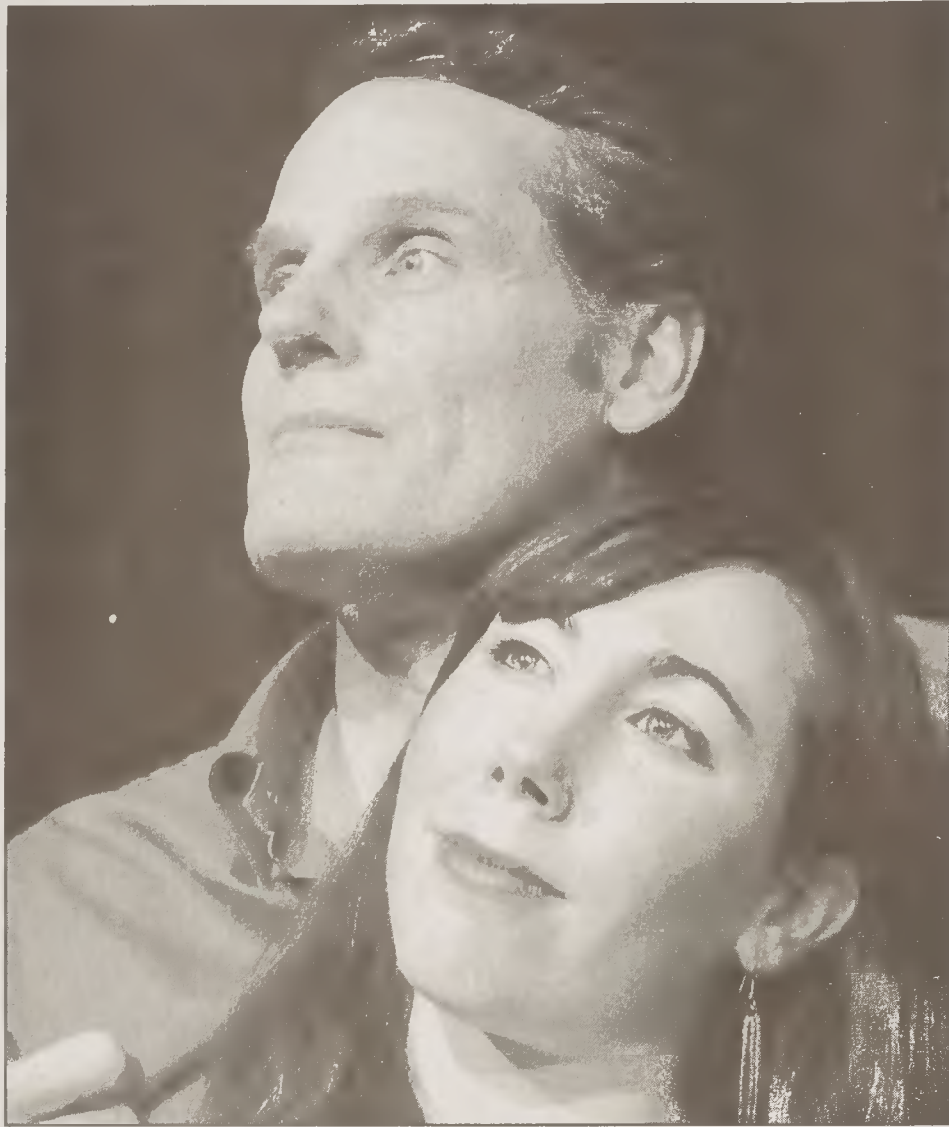
Andrew came to Paris, of all cities, to escape love.

The opposite happens for Andrew. For 90 minutes, “Limonade” deconstructs what love and desire mean to these two people and, in the process, they develop a strong relationship.

It takes a while to get to know Andrew, but Ya Ya is all out there, always poised to wax poetics and trudge through the mired philosophy of her experiences.

“Limonade” employs multiple methods of media to address the couple’s relationship.

One scene is all talk, while another is a slow operatic dance, choreographed by Julie Gillum.



“Limonade Tous les Jours,” now playing at the Asheville Community Theatre’s 35below, explores a love story between an American man and Parisian woman and stars Rob Storrs, UNCA adjunct.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 35BELOW

**REVIEW**

The dance sequence offers the best example of unexpected beauty.

The “waiter,” (Cory Boughton) not quite a fully developed character climbs up on part of the set as Ya Ya tries on different dresses.

Ya Ya finds the right dress, and as she begins to dance with Andrew, the atten-

dant lip synchs opera.

At first laughable, the scene quickly captivates, reminiscent of a 1950s musical when spontaneous song and dance were widely accepted means of expression.

During scene breaks, a film runs over the backdrop showing the characters around town.

Seeing colorful, physical characters suddenly appear in black and white detracts from the sense of familiarity one gets having stage actors performing less than five feet away.

However, the juxtaposition is interesting in itself, aside from the story.

“My plays are broken, jagged, filled with sharp edges, filled with things that take sudden turns, careen into each other, smash up, veer off in sickening turns,” according to writer of the play Charles Mee on his Web site.

Mee’s unorthodox approach to playwriting has its foundations in the classics. He sees no story as original and presses others to rewrite even his own plays.

Some of Mee’s works are already a reworking of such plays as “The Bacchae” and “Orestes,” according to the Web site.

“Limonade Tous Les Jours” is directed by Jess Wells, who most recently directed “The American Dream” as a part of NC Stage Company’s Catalyst Series.

Since “Limonade” revolves around a couple, it might be best viewed by couples, unless the couple is unwilling to analyze their desires and what drives desire. Definitely engaging and provoking down to the subconscious, “Limonade Tous les Jours” gloriously delivers a sour kick with a sweet aftertaste.

It’s dramatic lines and ramblings are relative to us all.

“Limonade Tous les Jours” runs through February 19.

Performances are Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m. at 35below in the Asheville Community Theatre on 35 E. Walnut Street in downtown Asheville. Tickets are \$10.

**Coming soon to 35below:**

“Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me” by Frank McGuinness

A play that confronts Western and Arab tensions and explores the experience of the political hostage.

Opening April 7 @ 8p.m.

## “Million Dollar Baby” pulls no punches, swings for the Oscars

by Sean David Robinson  
Campus Editor

Boxing films are a tricky business. Actors hit the weight room for months at a time, injuries are just a poorly-pulled punch away and creating the illusion of reality can prove costly and ineffective if the director can’t make his audience believe that they’re watching a boxing match instead of actors simply pretending.

That is, of course, unless your actors are Clint Eastwood, Morgan Freeman and Hillary Swank. There you get Oscar nominations out the yin-yang.

Director and actor Eastwood had exactly this good fortune fall upon his newest creation, “Million Dollar Baby,” nominated for seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Actor (Eastwood), Best Actress (Swank) and Best Supporting Actor (Freeman).

Swank deftly delivers a simultaneously heart-warming and heart-wrenching performance in this critically acclaimed film, matched only in brilliance by Eastwood’s remarkable feel for low-key lighting and Freeman and Eastwood’s combined natural abilities to play ornery curmudgeons.

The story itself holds nothing back, but instead swings straight for the heartstrings of every member of the audience. Why this is so can’t be known without giving away the ending, but rest assured, no one will leave the theater light-hearted and whistling after seeing this dramatic masterpiece.

Screenwriter Paul Haggis adapted the story for “Million Dollar Baby” from a set of short stories written by F.X. Toole about aging boxing coach Frankie Duna (Eastwood) and his newest recruit, Maggie Fitzgerald (Swank).

The story follows Maggie’s pursuit of boxing glory under the guiding hand of Frankie, who reluctantly agrees to train Maggie, even though she’s 31 years old and, to his chagrin, a girl. After his life-long friend Eddie “Scrap-Iron” Dupris (Morgan Freeman) convinces Frankie to train Maggie, the two enjoy whirlwind success across the globe before tragedy befalls the pair, thus beginning the heart-wrenching aspect of the story.

The film is a masterfully constructed piece that combines Eastwood’s proven talent for darkly-lit shots with his eye for capturing human emotion.

The story itself hinges on the idea that the audience isn’t sure whether Frankie will train Maggie at all, and then, for how long before abandoning her. Eastwood captures the essence of this uncertainty by placing himself and other characters that help Maggie in lighting that only illuminates them from the chest down, dehumanizing them to an extent, but also making their presence seem temporal.

As the plot progresses we learn that Frankie really does care for Maggie, and Eastwood correspondingly alters his lighting schemes to reveal more of the characters’ faces with closer, more brightly-lit shots that allow the audience to see the permanence and intensity of the boxer’s relationship with her coach.

A point of contention with the film is a common one with any Eastwood effort: With previews and commercials excluded, the run-time was just over two hours long. There are no chase scenes, no spaceship special effects and no pop-tunes to make the time pass any faster.

Eastwood’s approach, as was the case with his box office hit “Mystic River,” is to force the audience to endure the quiet pains and pleasures of his characters, no matter how long it takes.

## Picnic’s: The place to go if you miss mom’s down-home cooking

by Katie Rozycki  
Staff Reporter

It’s hard to miss Picnic’s, the little red barn off Merrimon Avenue. After spending so many trips up and down that road, it is easy to group this small scarlet restaurant jumbled with a myriad of other businesses. This quaint little eatery is worth a stop if you’re looking for a meal that rivals mom’s.

In many cases, the food surpassed expectations and many mothers’ cooking aptitude.

The restaurants’ wood-roasted chicken was spectacularly tender and juicy. Perhaps it did border on greasy, but come on, the messiness is worth it.

Marinated with fresh garlic, citrus juices and other spices, the blend added flavor and juiciness to the bird.

Picnic’s chicken pot-pie was the real winner. It even beat their fabulous oven-roasted chicken.

Served in an old-fashioned tin, with a thick, flaky crust, Colonel Sanders couldn’t hold a candle to this. Just under the buttery crust was a large portion of extra thick stew, loaded with peas, carrots and large chunks of ultra-tender chicken. Eating this compares to heaven on earth, if you look past the odd gray color of the stew.

Their sides were satisfying accompaniments to the chicken, and stand just fine on their own as well.

An all-around favorite was the macaroni and cheese, a time-tested, classic recipe. Picnic’s obviously knows how it’s done.

Creamy, milky cheese lies in between densely-packed noodles with crispy cheese on top.

Not overdone with too much



CHARLOTTE CLAYPOOLE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Picnic’s on Merrimon Ave. offers a wide selection of country cooking at a reasonable price.

cheese, the macaroni and cheese is a perfect combination of all essential ingredients.

The healthier veggie options were just as good.

Fresh-tasting, crisp kale was a favorite. It

was cooked well, but still retained its crunchy texture, not succumbing to soggy-ness like cooked greens are prone to do. The green beans were unique, with loads of pepper, potatoes and bacon

mixed in. Though they were a bit watery, the flavor made up for it. Two of the less spectacular sides are Picnic’s stuffing and Parmesan mashed potatoes. The stuffing was well-flavored but not magnificent. The texture erred a little too much on

the mushy side and didn’t seem fully cooked.

The mashed potatoes were painfully dry, with a bitter flavor that signaled a little too much parmesan.

A selection of assorted breads rounded out the meal. The highlight, by far, was the cornbread.

Wonderfully soft and sweet, this crumbly confection melts in the mouth and could easily serve as dessert. Though served with butter, it definitely is not needed.

Another option is their cheese biscuit: old-fashioned dry, crumbly bread with a flakey crust, marbled with bits of cheese. The cheddar cheese amid the flakes of bread was a welcome addition to a classic southern old standby.

Picnic’s has a wide array of

**REVIEW**

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“You can tell they work hard to serve their customers.”

Lauren Fox  
sophomore psychology student

mouth-watering desserts to perfectly finish off any meal.

From cookies the size of your hand, to rich, creamy cheese-cakes, to homemade pies, there’s definitely something for everyone in the dessert department.

“You could tell everything we got was homemade,” said Mary Catherine Grant, undeclared freshman. “It didn’t feel like it was frozen and they just warmed it up.”

Words could not describe Reese’s Peanut Butter Pie made with a brownie crust and smooth peanut butter cream, topped with melted chocolate, words cannot describe the deliciousness of this pie.

“It took me an hour to eat it because it was just so good, I wanted to savor every moment of it,” said Grant.

Another well-received cake was their Red Velvet.

A large portion, this Red Velvet had three layers of dense chocolate cake packed in between with thick sheets of sweet cream cheese.

The cream cheese icing is wonderful. Sweet, creamy, but not too strong, the icing was a perfect accompaniment to the cake.

Picnic’s “Death by Chocolate” cake might actually live up to its name.

Overwhelmingly chocolaty, most people simply couldn’t handle its intensity.

“I can’t really handle that much chocolate,” said Lauren Fox, sophomore psychology student.

However, for those who can and gladly will handle insane

amounts of chocolate, by all means go for it. This will serve well.

The prices at Picnic’s were just like their food-good on most occasions, with only a few disappointments.

Their Reese’s Pie was close to four dollars for a minuscule portion, but their cakes were satisfyingly large.

Their pot-pie is \$5.99, and only two extra dollars for an addition of a side and

bread. Their veggie plate is also \$5.99, and, with the right choice of sides, this is a great value.

If a large group is eating, and you can make a few group decisions without having to duke it out, the family deals are the way to go.

For only \$18.99, you get one whole chicken, two large sides and four rolls.

An assembly line-like serving area made getting the meal prompt and convenient.

There is simply a paneled window over the sides offered, and you can request what you want that way.

The whole process made carryout ordering very efficient.

Call-ahead ordering is also welcomed.

In fact, anything is welcome in this store.

The employees were nothing less than wonderful when dealing with customers.

“You can tell they work hard to serve their customers (well),” said Fox.