

Drumming and teaching with a passion

by Jason Cohen

A love affair with music led Adam Feldman to a chance encounter with a band director some time ago. He's taken this love and instills it in his students who gain much from his inspiring background.

"Since I've taught in a total of six high schools this past summer, I figured that maybe I could get a job teaching Scotland County High School's drumline," Adam Feldman said. "One day, I went over there and chilled with the band director, and then she gave me this job. I teach about 21 students [who] are in the drumline. Once section marches and the other plays on the sideline of the field.

"I transferred back to my home state, Georgia, and went to a local university called Kennesaw State University.

My plans were to transfer again to the University of Georgia and play in the U.G.A. drumline. The thinkg that changed my mind was the one trip I made to St. Andrews during '97 Ganza to visit some friends. After that weekend, I did a lot of thinking and realized that St. Andrews felt more like home than anywhere else, so I came back."

Feldman spends a good deal of time teaching and practicing with his students, up to 10 hours a week. But he spends much more time writing the music for the drumline.

"I love the fact that there are so many different rudiments that can be played on the drums, menaing that there are a lot of different 'stickings' in the way the music can be played. Overall, percussion lets me in a world

of my own. Whether I play or compose, I feel free and good about myself. When I teach drumline and that drumline plays the music I wrote, it makes me feel great. When I see a high school drumline win a competition with the music I wrote, it is the most satisfying feeling in the world," Feldman said.

"I first became interested in teaching music when I was in my high school marching band. I played in the drumline and I was always interested in my drum instructor's teaching style; so, I started writing my own drum scores and began giving private lessons. Each summer I traveled to different states to teach high school drumlines. I've been doing this since I graduated from high school," Feldman said.



The intrepid cynic goes to the theatre

(Continued from page 3)

draws. In this case, however, I only have two chances to get myself hung because one of the main characters is the narrator.

Everybody who hates *Our Town* despises the narrator. The narrator talks to the audience, says thank you to the actors after they do their scenes (STOP THAT!) and muses on life, the universe and everything. Everything. This performance of *Our Town*, like any other, left me wanting to gag the narrator—and not just because she was Suzyn Smith.

And she was Suzyn Smith. Seeing her dressed and speaking like she does on campus, there was little separation from her stage persona and herself. Sure, it works for Dennis Miller, but Smith isn't Dennis Miller. In *Our Town*, the narrator brings everyone in the play together. Smith didn't demonstrate the chemistry with the characters that was necessary to carry the play.

As for the other two leads, Dana Youmans and Mary Fleetwood performed admirably in their parts. Both eagerly displayed the honesty, pure gushy-goodness, naivete and...eagerness of their characters. That's not to say at times I didn't want

to sniper them off from the projector room just for the sheer cheesiness of their lines, but that's another script dilemma. (What? Even if they stunk I'm not stupid enough to incense *their* fan clubs. I only have one fanatic to their combat their combined legions. There are some forces you just don't mess with. Even in their few dubious moments, I can assure you that they weren't slacking.)

I still hate *Our Town*. This performance merely proved that good actors can happen to bad plays. In the "Director's Notes" on the playbill, director Eric Jennings admits that when he was in school, "Like many of my classmates, I thought this was the most boring, simple play I had ever read." He goes on to say that it "takes life to love life," implying if you don't love the play you haven't lived. So condescend to me some more Mr. Jennings, and answer two questions. If you knew we wouldn't like it why'd you put it on? If it "takes life to love life," why does the third act hate life so much?

Be nice: There were good moments and there was much decent (or better) acting.

Be honest: I really didn't want to do this. I told them it was a bad idea. Oh, and I saw Assistant Director of Communications Ann Kurtzman check her watch during the first act. Even I never checked

my watch.

Destroy them: I lost my watch weeks ago and wouldn't have brought it with me if I had known where it was.

Ever spent a three hour class checking your watch? I don't recommend it.

-by Greg Chatham

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