

Arts & Entertainment

CRIMES OF THE HEART IS A MUST SEE

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Missed seeing "Crimes of the Heart?" Then you've committed a crime! This Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy written by Beth Henly and directed by junior Viking Nykki Houston kept audiences rolling.

The play was shown nightly at 7:30 from February 20 through the 25 in the Elizabeth City State University's Little theatre.

Nykki Houston was first introduced to "Crimes of the Heart" when it was performed at her high school and she decided to try directing it. Ms. Houston is a member of the University Choir and the president of the University Players. She has acted in two previous ECSU plays: "Lysistrata" and "Dark of the Moon," and has written several one act plays. Last Spring Houston's one act play "i brought her forget-me-nots" was produced during the one-act plays festival. During the upcoming festival, April 16 & 17, her one act play "Lost Funds" will also be performed.

"Crimes of the Heart" is a hilarious play about the reunion of three sisters who live very different lives. The sisters are forced to reunite unexpectedly after Babe, the youngest sister, shoots her husband.

The play opens in the Magrath kitchen in Hazlehurst, Mississippi, in the fall of 1974, five years after Hurricane Camille. At the beginning of the play we find Lenny Magrath, played by Rebecca Goehring, celebrating her birthday alone in the kitchen of her grandfather's house. Lenny has just turned 30 years old and is the oldest of the three sisters; she is quickly becoming an old maid because she spends most of her time caring for her ailing grandfather who raised them.

Meg Magrath, played by Julia Goodman-Todd, is 27 and she is the middle sister. Meg has been away in Hollywood trying to become a successful singer/actress, but her failure in stardom

is nearly as bad as her track record with men.

Babe Botrelle, played by Krystle Lee, is 24. Babe, is probably the most eccentric of the three sisters and she has just shot her husband Zackery Botrelle in the stomach at the beginning of the play, and Lenny has sent a telegram to Meg asking her to come home.

During the play the sisters' first cousin, Chick Boyle, played by Quincina Uzzell, sporadically annoys the three sisters. Meg has a fling with an old flame, Doc Porter who is now married. Doc Porter is played by Christopher Figgs. Lenny's secret personals ad romance is revealed. Lenny dated a gentleman named Charlie from Memphis, but then abruptly broke up with him due to fear that he would not want her because she has shrunken ovaries and cannot have children. Her sisters convince Lenny to make up with Charlie and she does. Also, Barnette Lloyd, a new lawyer in town with a personal vendetta against Zackery Botrelle, becomes Babe's defense attorney. Barnette Lloyd is played by Michael Edwards. Unfortunately for Babe, Zackery's sister hired a private investigator to follow Babe weeks before Babe shot Zackery. The private investigator has taken photos of Babe having an affair with Willie Jay, a fifteen year-old boy. This ruins the lawyer's case and causes much shame for Babe. However, the play does end on a good note as the sisters celebrate Lenny's birthday and smear each other's faces with icing. There are many funny and memorable moments in the play such as when Lenny repeatedly lights a candle on a cookie and sings "Happy Birthday" to herself, or when Babe makes lemonade with lemons, water, and Coca Cola. If you have not seen the play you certainly should or at least rent the video adaptation of the play also called "Crime of the Hearts," starring Diane Keaton (Lenny), Jessica Lange (Meg), and Sissy Spacek (Babe).

JAY-Z THE BLUEPRINT: MTV UNPLUGGED

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After taking over the hip-hop scene with his classic *The Blueprint*, Jay-Z returned and did the only thing he could do: a live album. The *MTV Unplugged 2.0 series* came calling on HOVA and, in return, made one of the best 13-track live albums ever recorded in hip-hop.

With The Roots band hitting all the right notes, the album opens up with a great rendition of the hit *Izzo (HOVA)*. Jay-Z then goes into 'the battle' as he turns up the heat for a sly rendition of *Takeover*, a song in which he talks about hip-hop artists Nas and Prodigy of Mobb Deep. The Roots band includes a sample of songs by Nas and Mobb Deep and it blends perfectly with Jay-Z's rhymes.

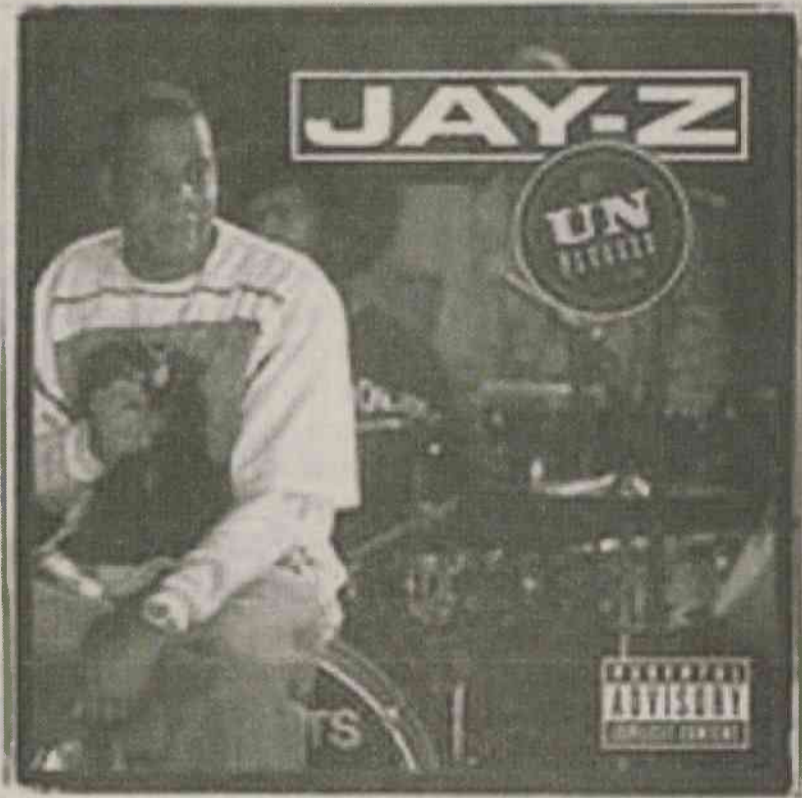
Jigga then takes us back to such hits as *Can't Knock The Hustle* (with a surprise appearance by Mary J. Blige), *Hard Knock Life*, and a crowd-pleasing

rendition of *I Just Wanna Love You*, which included a special appearance by The Neptunes' super-producer Pharrell and Roc-A-Fella CEO Damon Dash.

The gem on this album is the beautiful renditions of songs *Cry* and *Heart of the City (Ain't No Love)*. Soul singer Jaguar Wright enhances The Roots' beats with her silky, smooth voice to the point where Jay-Z is momentarily overshadowed. Jay-Z's rhymes, Wright's voice, and The Roots seem to blend together perfectly on this album.

This is the next best thing to actually being there live. It is a wonderful rendition of a classic album. The inclusion of a live rendition of *Jigga That N***** and the bonus track *People Talking*, makes this live album stand out. As we prepare for the Jay-Z/ R. Kelly album *Best of Both Worlds* and the release of *Blueprint 2* scheduled for November, this album only heightens the anticipation of the future.

C-Nice's Rating: ****1/2



Jay-Z
-photo courtesy of www.jayzfan.com



The Cast of Crimes of The Heart

(Michael Edwards, Quincina Uzzell, Julia Goodman-Todd, Rebecca Goehring, Krystle Lee, and Christopher Figgs.)

-photo by Inger Parker

USHER'S 8710

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After having great success in music and in Hollywood, Usher has returned with his third official album *8701*. After being put on hold because of the major demand for the album (some songs were illegally 'leaked' to the public before the official release date), Usher went back into the studio and added some songs to make *8701* even better. While the future looks bright for the young star, this album shows maturity and a better appreciation for the vocal skills of Usher.

The album is full of potential

singles, such as the hit *U Remind Me*, which was co-produced by Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis for Flyte Time Productions. Usher easily lends his vocals to this laid-back track that includes a catchy chorus, which seems to be a necessary characteristic if an artist wants a hit today. On *U Got It Bad*, Usher's vocals, though not exceptional, shine through. The story told through the song is easily identifiable and includes another laid-back beat, produced by So So Def producer Jermaine Dupri.

Usher picks up the tempo with the hit single *U Don't Have to Call*, produced by the super-producers The Neptunes. The track uses The Neptunes' trademark

sound and Usher effortlessly lends his vocals. The Neptunes also show up on *I Don't Know*, which also features Sean "P. Diddy" Combs.

Other songs, including the slow jam *Two of Us* and *Separated*, help make this release Usher's best to date. Critics of his vocal talent have to be impressed with his latest offering. Consistently good tracks and great production make *8701* an impressive album.

C-Nice's Rating: ****

Hot V-Tracks

1. Jay-Z & R. Kelly *Honey*
2. State Property *Roc the Mic*
3. Camron *Oh Boy*
4. Fat Joe *What's Luv?*
5. Tweet *Oops, Oh My!*
6. Busta Rhymes *Pass the Courvoisier*
7. Royce Da 5'9 *Rock City*
8. Mary J. Blige *Rainy Dayz*
9. Jahiem *Anything*
10. Usher *U Don't Have to Call*

Check out C-Nice and *The Saturday Night Jamboree* every Saturday at 9pm! Only on WRVS-FM 89.9!