

Students work long hours, become family in "Children of Eden"

Tammy Tripp
The Pendulum

Sounds. Lights. Costumes. Scripts. Frenzy.

The "Children of Eden" have worked hard in the garden; the tiny dance studio that serves as a stage has yielded plenty of fruit. But the fruit has not grown without a great deal of sacrifice.

The actors are dedicated to the stage and have a special love for performing. Rehearsal is five days a week, from Sunday to Thursday. Rehearsals begin at 6 p.m. and can end as late as 10 p.m. or even midnight.

The actors show a great deal of patience. Senior Tara Taylor, who plays Yonah, said that during a practice it is not unusual to redo a scene several times.

"Sometimes we rehearse the songs over and over, and my vocal cords will get tired. It will be worth it when the play runs, though," she said.

A video camera records the actors during rehearsals to show the directors scenes that need work. Notes are taken on the performers as well.

Outside of rehearsals, individual cast members spend time to improve their characters. Sophomore Ryan Dunn, who plays God,

shows a love for the theater and he is dedicated to "Children of Eden."

"I usually spend one to two hours outside of rehearsal working on the songs and practicing my lines," he said.

Much of the actors' time is spent rehearsing and little time is left for homework and extracurricular activities. During rehears-



practice applying makeup to add to the effect of their costume.

The actors are quick to point out that "Children of Eden" is not a religious play, but a love story. The play will not be a preachy show, even though it is based loosely on the first nine and a half chapters of Genesis. It is also a play about choices and the structure of families. One of the main themes is the circle of the human race and how it is continuously repeated. The actors play multiple roles to illustrate the circle. Dan Calloway stars first as Adam and later as Noah.

The play does contain religious undertones, but it does not strictly follow the Bible. Yonah, the servant girl, is a character that does not exist in the Bible. She was added to further illustrate the relationship between humans.

The actors are challenged to play Biblical roles.

"Trying to portray God and think as God would think has been one of the biggest challenges," said Dunn.

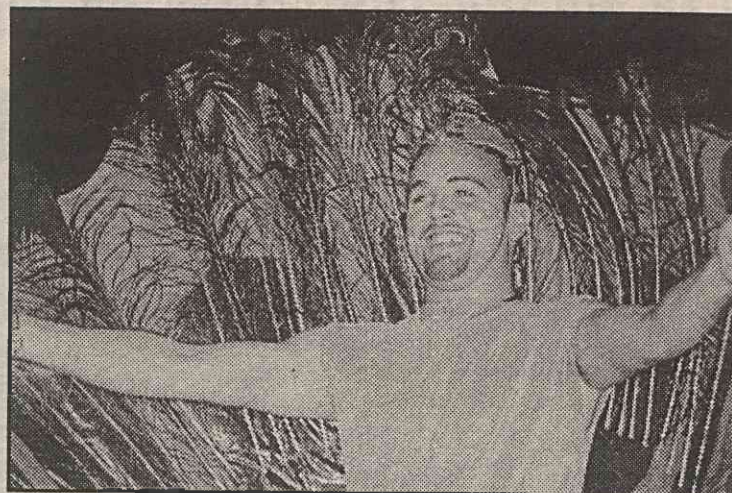
"It has been difficult to differentiate between my personal relationship with God and between Eve's relationship with God," Nancy Snow, who plays Eve, said.

The creation story has been modernized. The show does not offer much dialogue, but places

als, notebooks and even laptops are spread across the floor. Homework and studying lines for the upcoming scene is done between scenes.

Actors and directors are not the only people contributing to the play. Preparation for the production began long before school started. Work began for Bill Webb and Dale Breker, directors of the lighting and technical crew, in July.

Costumes and some props for the play are rented. The actors are fitted for the costumes after the costumes are decided upon. The actors



Jenny Jarnecke/The Pendulum

Students rehearse long hours for "Children of Eden."

more emphasis on the music. However, the songs are far from traditional. They are catchy with a quick, upbeat tempo. And with "Children of Eden" in only its second local run, it is still fresh.

Cast and crew spend endless

hours at work but they all agree it has been worth it. The cast spends more than twenty hours a week together and it has made them seem as if they are one big family. And for the four nights that the show runs, they will be.

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