

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Nelson presents 'Brighton Beach Memoirs'

In the Bubble

Tonight 10/7

Black Box Theater
"Brighton Beach
Memoirs"
7:30 p.m.

The Zone
Sweet Signatures
11:30 p.m.

Friday 10/8

The Zone
Phirst Pham Poetry
Slam
7-9 p.m.

Black Box Theater
"Brighton Beach
Memoirs"
7:30 p.m.

Saturday 10/9

Black Box Theater
"Brighton Beach
Memoirs"
2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Sunday 10/10

Black Box Theater
"Brighton Beach
Memoirs"
2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday 10/13

Yeager Recital Hall
Alan Shapiro Poetry
Reading
7:30 p.m.



Laura Hals / Photographer

Phillip Ward, Katie Hilliard, Corey Roberts, Heather Haley, Ken Handler, John Kernodle and Molly Molomascomo star in Elon's fall play "Brighton Beach Memoirs," directed by senior Brian Nelson. The show, which highlights the adolescence of playwright Neil Simon, will run through Sunday.

Virginia Galvez
Reporter

"Brighton Beach Memoirs," showing this Wednesday through Friday in the Black Box Theatre, takes a look at a Jewish family trying to make it through the Great Depression. Set in Brighton Beach, New York, this student-run production uses its seven cast members to illuminate important issues of the pre-World War II era and illuminate parallel issues in today's world news. Written by Neil Simon, "Brighton Beach" is the first of an autobiographical trilogy followed by "Biloxi Blues" and ending with "Broadway Bound."

"Neil Simon is amazing as far as the way he can combine the human soul's will to survive and add a comedic twist to it," said director Brian Nelson.

Focusing on the hard times of the Depression as well as the time

leading up to World War II, "Brighton Beach" takes on a mix of difficult issues. The seven-member cast consisting of Phillip Ward, Katie Hilliard, Corey Roberts, Heather Haley, Ken Handler, John Kernodle and Molly Molomascomo brings out the importance of family, both past and present.

"The chemistry that this cast has is unlike any other show done before," said Ken Handler, who played Eugene, the 15-year-old narrator of the show. "Considering there are only seven people in this show, we really got to live as a family for the last three weeks."

The character of Eugene tells his imaginative view on life through the stories he writes down in his diary.

In addition to the seven-member cast, the production is 100 percent student-run. The play is directed by senior Brian Nelson as his senior project. Phill Hill serves

as stage director, Kelly Arlinghaus as the technical director and scenic designer, Lauren Kolstad as the lighting designer and Olivia Andrews as the assistant stage manager. In this particular production, both actors and technicians understand the parallel of the issues presented in "Brighton Beach," with the problems of today.

"I feel this has been one of the more significant shows I have done, considering the time we are in" said stage manager Phill Hill. "This show is significant now with everything going on overseas ... it's really about how family is the most important thing."

"Brighton Beach" tackles the tough topics while still keeping coming of age issues at hand through the narratives of Eugene. Despite the financial problems of the Great Depression, the play covers a growing boy's comedic first encounters with the opposite

sex, the responsibility of being an older sibling, the struggle of having family members in trouble overseas, and two sisters' reconciliation.

"The most beautiful part about it is the look inside the strength of a family in one of the most difficult times in history," said Hill.

"Brighton Beach" opened Wednesday and is on stage through Saturday, with a 2 p.m. show time on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are available for \$12 or for free with a valid Phoenix card.

Reservations are highly recommended for this show and can be made at the box office or by calling the Black Box Theatre reservation line at ext. 5650.

Contact Virginia Galvez at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.

