



MERISSA BLITZ | Staff Photographer

Above: Sophomore Claire Manship performed a monologue about reclaiming a perjorative word sometimes used to refer to a vagina. Manship performed in the Vagina Monologues, an annual tradition at Elon University. Below: Freshman Karrah Fleshman told the story of a woman who grew to accept her vagina because of someone else's fascination with that body part. The event is traditionally held on Valentine's Day.

A closer look 'down there'

Annual 'Vagina Monologues' empowers women and men

Lauren Ramsdell
Reviewer

Valentine's Day at Elon University usually features girls walking back from the Mail Center laden with Teleflora boxes, men dressed in their snazzy best and singles out to dinner with their friends. Another tradition is the annual production of "The Vagina Monologues," a play based on interviews conducted with thousands of women.

Playwright Eve Ensler, the interviewer who compiled the Monologues, first had the compilation performed in 1996 and has continually worked to update the Monologues.

The Monologues were directed by sophomore Rebekah Carmichael and sponsored by Elon Feminists for Equality, Change and Transformation and the Women's and Gender Studies Program.

Fourteen women performed the Monologues in roles ranging from dark to happy and everything in between. Characters included a divorcee whose husband repeatedly cheated on her, a 72-year-old woman who never became intimate with anyone out of nervousness and fear and an Afghan woman forced to wear the burqa. Each monologue brought laughter, gasps of surprise or stunned silence, based on the subject.

Some monologues deserve special mention for their poignancy and portrayal.

Freshman Sara Spadacene performed "The Flood" as the 72-year-old woman with understated humor, believable unease and quiet snark. Junior Paloma White made the audience believe that her vagina was, indeed, angry in "My Angry Vagina." And in "Because He Liked to Look at It," freshman Karrah Fleshman described coming to terms with her own body.

Throughout the performance, there were snippets of shocking facts. More than 130 million women around the world have had female genital mutilation performed on them, and 3 million more are added every year. In the United States, 200 million women are raped each year. And in 2000s-era Afghanistan, women were treated "as walking corpses."

Sophomore Liz Green is an independent Women's and Gender Studies major who performed in the Monologues last year. She performed "The Little Coochie Snorcher That Could," a story about repressed sexuality, rape and eventually, acceptance.

"It's a message I believe in," she said. "Being a woman is a beautiful thing and there is no shame in having a vagina."

Sophomores Davis Allen and Elizabeth Moss came to the Monologues for Valentine's day.

"I think the message of female empowerment is really important and lends itself to different



contexts," Allen said.

Moss has been coming to the Monologues each year she's been at Elon and began seeing them before she was in college.

"(They are) funny, sad and powerful. You don't have to be a woman to appreciate that," she said.

MORE ONLINE: STYLE

Video: The women of The Vagina Monologues talk about their experience in the show.
<http://bit.ly/TPOmonologues>
Laura Van Drie,
Multimedia Intern

End of the world and superheroes to boot



Michelle Wilson
Columnist

The year 2012 may bring the infamous "end of days," but the human race may just be protected by all the superheroes the big screen is bringing. Almost every hero one can think of is flying, crawling, teleporting or swinging out of underground hiding in the next couple of years, looking to save the day.

Andrew Garfield's "Spider-Man" may have

to compete in the box office with another revamp of a popular comic book hero: "Superman." It seems that Hollywood can't stay away from the Kryptonian Man of Steel for too long. With "Smallville," the television show charting Clark Kent's early life, finishing its tenth and final season, and the 2006 "Superman Returns" not being a huge critical success, maybe it is time for a new man to wear the cape.

The "man" in question is Henry Cavill, a British-born actor who's gotten a bit of flack for seemingly not fitting the part, because some fans wanted Jon Hamm from "Mad Men" for the role. Cavill is new to intense action films, mostly co-starring in period films and shows like "The Tudors" and the movie "Stardust," but that may be in his favor as no one has much to judge him yet. Not much else is known about the film, other than Zack Snyder is set to direct.

One actor not at all new to the superhero circuit is Chris Evans, who in the past starred as Johnny Storm, aka The Human Torch, in "The Fantastic Four." Evans plays Steve Rogers, who volunteers for a top secret research project that turns him into Captain America, a superhero dedicated to defending the country he was named after. The film "Captain America: The First Avenger" is just that — the first before the star-packed film "The Avengers," which stars Evans again as Captain America, Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man, Jeremy Renner as Hawkeye, Mark Ruffalo as Bruce Banner and several other heroes.

The justice doesn't stop there. Another film that is jamming in several superheroes is "X-Men: First Class." The movie, set in the 1960s, follows Charles Xavier before he became Professor X, Erik Lehnsherr before he became Magneto and their group of "gifted" friends. Some have appeared in the original X-Men series, like Mystique, and some new, like Beast, played by Nicholas Hoult from "Skins (U.K.)," fame. The movie will probably be this summer's box-office hit, as it stars James McAvoy and Michael Fassbender. Plus, it's X-Men and everyone loves X-Men.

For those interested in comic books, all one can do is count down the days until the action-packed moves come out. For those who couldn't care less about superpowers, evil villains or caped crusaders, well, you can always just hope the Mayans were right.

One Act plays will showcase student productions

Stephanie Butzer
Reporter

The Black Box Theatre is once again hosting a round of shows that will run the gamut from comedy to tragedy.

The upcoming performances are part of the One Act Festival.

"It's great because it consists of student-directed plays where students who aren't currently in any mainstage shows are able to keep working on their craft," said Jeff Masters, president of the Theatre Honors Society and producer of the One Act Festival.

The performances will start on Friday, Feb. 18 at 7:30 p.m. There are other shows on Saturday, Feb. 19 and 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and a final performance Feb. 20 at 2 p.m.

Masters said that directing the plays is not only a lot less stressful than directing an entire play, but it gives the actors an opportunity to

experiment more.

The play's adviser is Fred Rubeck, and although he is not directly involved in producing the plays, he is the professor who approves of their plans. Both of these plays are 100 percent student-produced.

One of the directors of the plays is junior Julia Gallagher. She has been involved in the performing arts since her freshman year when she was on deck crew for "The Pavilion" and "Sweeney Todd." In addition, she had the opportunity to stage manage the 24 Hour Plays from last year. In this year's One Act Festival, there are two plays.

"I'm directing 'For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls,'" Gallagher said, a comedy and parody of Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie."

The other director, junior Kabby Borders, is in charge of directing the drama "The Seventeenth of June."

Directing the show has been an irreplaceable privilege for Gallagher,

she said. She said she loves being able to create visions in her head and then see them come to life. She also said that the actors she works with are equally talented people.

"I've never directed before, so it's definitely been an amazing learning experience," she said.

As a director for this event, Gallagher has a lot of extra responsibilities. She usually gets to rehearsal early in order to set up and prepare the scenery and props for the practice. Once everything is set and the assistant director, assistant stage manager and actors arrive, the group does a warm-up check-in.

"We go around in a circle to see how everybody's day was and see how everyone is feeling," she said. This is an important process because it may affect the day's work. Depending on where the group is in the process, the group will work on individual parts of "For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls" or run the

Black Box Theatre One Act shows

Black Box One Acts are Feb. 18-20 in the Black Box Theatre. Shows will be Friday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 2 and 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Performing arts majors will direct the short plays.

Admission is \$5 or free with an Elon ID.

entire show. Sometimes Gallagher and her assistant director work on fine-tuning some things after the rehearsals have ended.

The plays run for one weekend and are free to Elon students with an ID. But, since the one-act plays are in the small Black Box Theatre, it is recommended to get there up to an hour before the performance begins.