

New year, new 'Tapped Out!'

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Elon University's annual tap performance "Tapped Out!" is back with surprises and rhythms from all over the world. This show has several tap pieces, each telling a different story and evoking different feelings within the audience.

The show is directed by Gene Medler, adjunct instructor in dance, who choreographed two pieces in the show. But different from other years, students this year also choreographed some of the numbers.

Dancers were chosen for numbers by taking into account their different strengths.

"The show just forms itself," Medler said. "It's a resolve of the different likes and dislikes and desires that the dancers bring to the show. I have a preconceived idea of what I want to do for my two dances. We don't really say, 'This is our show and this is how it's going to go.' We kind of find out who we have and we mold the show from there."

The dancers of "Tapped Out!" are both new and returning performers. Junior Dan Lusardi has been invited by Medler to perform in "Tapped Out!" for the second time. He has been tap dancing since he was 11, and even as a musical theater major he still manages to take one of Medler's tap classes every semester.

Lusardi is choreographing his own piece for the show. Using the song "Something" by The Beatles, he took aspects of the classic-rock

hit into a song he can tap to.

"It's cool because I just took the baseline and then some of the drums," Lusardi said. "It's very rhythmic. Maybe that will be the highlight of the show, but no promises."

Each number has a different tone, even the two numbers Medler choreographed, the opening number has Peruvian and Cuban rhythms whereas the other is a bebop piece.

Senior Jillian Hannah believes the first number will captivate the audience. The dance follows the rhythm of a Cajon, a wooden drum.

"We split into three groups and we're each tapping a different rhythm," Hannah said. "My group starts and we do this one rhythm, and then we bring it all together and do it all at the same time."

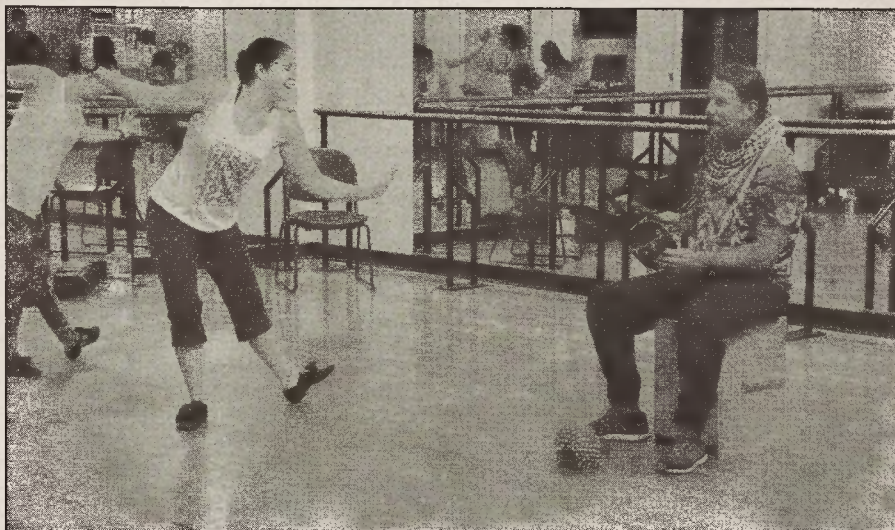
There will be some audience interaction throughout the performance so the audience feels a connection with the dancers.

During the last number, the dancers will teach audience members a simple tap dance so everyone can participate.

"At the end we always do the shim-shim which is that one tap dance that anybody who's ever taken tap knows," Hannah said.

Hannah believes this interactive number is just as good as the challenging opening dance because it brings everyone together.

"I love that we finish with the shim-sham," she said. "Honestly, I think it's the greatest part of the show, because like here we are doing all this crazy stuff, and then you finish it with the dance that every-



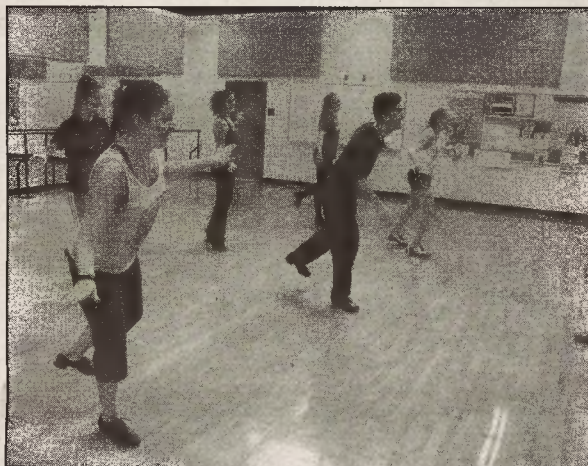
Senior Rachel Ingersoll rehearses her number for 'Tapped Out!' with director Gene Medler for their show starting Friday, Jan. 22.

body learns and that everybody knows."

According to Lusardi, this performance is completely different from all of the other dance shows at Elon.

"It's the only thing like this on campus all year," he said. "It's just really cool how much work they can all get done in just two and a half weeks. I hope it impacts the audience. Maybe it will inspire someone to take a tap class. It's not too late to start. I just hope that they gain an appreciation for the art form because it's hard. It's hard work."

Shows will run Friday, Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and Saturday Jan. 23 at 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the Black Box Theatre.



Students rehearse the tap numbers they choreographed themselves.

Winter Stock Theater presents Shakespeare's problem play

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With its premiere only days away, the cast and crew of this year's Winter Stock Theater production of William Shakespeare's "All's Well That Ends Well" is making the final touches to bring the classic play to life.

"All's Well That Ends Well" tells the story of unrequited love and what a young woman is willing to go through to win the love of her life.

Each year, Elon University's performing arts department offers the course "Winter Stock Theater," which combines both a class and preparation for the full-length show.

The actors are cast before November so they have time before the rehearsal period to memorize lines. Actors have been working eight hour days since the start of Winter Term.

"All's Well That Ends Well" is one of Shakespeare's lesser-known works, which director Fred Rubeck, professor of performing arts and chair of the department of performing arts, said has worked to the actors' advantage.

"It's kind of cool to think about one of the most famous playwrights and bringing one of his lesser known pieces to life," Rubeck said. "It's the kind of freedom that gives us because it doesn't carry all the same baggage that the more famous ones do. We've been able to make it our own."

The script has not been changed aside from some line cuts, which most directors do when working with Shakespeare to adapt it for modern audiences.

Instead of completely changing the litera-



Winter Stock Theater's 'All's Well That Ends Well' is set in the early 20th century instead of the 1600s.

ture, Rubeck has chosen to set the play in the early 20th century in Europe between World War I and World War II.

This change will be reflected in the set and costumes the actors wear.

"The play has a lot of issues about men and women and women's rights, so the idea of early 20th century and women's rights and suffrage has become a lot more of a hot button topic around the world, which made it a decent time for the show," Rubeck said.

Senior Hunter McCormick, who plays The Countess, one of the leading roles in the show, said the alterations allow the audience to connect more with the story.

"The great thing about Shakespeare is you really can change it and it just adds to the interest of the audience seeing the play and to the interest of the actors doing the play," Mc-

Cormick said.

Junior Olivia Richardson, who plays Helen, the heroine of the play, said the adjustment takes one of Shakespeare's more difficult plays and makes it less complicated.

"The language is a little bit more difficult, the story is a little more complicated than usual," Richardson said. "Moving it up in time brings it more into the now."

"All's Well That Ends Well" is considered one of Shakespeare's "problem plays" because it is neither a comedy, romance or tragedy — it falls somewhere in between. This ambiguity brings about many questions that many playwrights oftentimes just hand over to the audience.

"We found very human flaws among the whole cast of characters," Rubeck said. "Here's a young woman who is in love with a young

man who doesn't love her back and the ends to which she goes to win him. Some of the things we look at and say, 'Well I'd have you at the judicial hearing board' because it's stalking and things like that from a modern viewpoint. While you root for her, you think, 'Well, that's kind of creepy.'"

Usually by the end of a play, the audience understands the moral of the show. But "All's Well That Ends Well" is more perplexing.

"This one you get to the end, even the title, the idea of the ends justifying the means is a really questionable viewpoint," Rubeck said. "That's a very modern sensitivity to leave those loose ends and allows us to talk about what happened and what it meant, rather than wrapping it up in a neat, little package."

The unusually restricted amount of time the actors were presented with to prepare for this show did nothing but heighten the experience for both actors and director.

"I think the work just has to happen faster, and we have to trust each other more that there was work done before coming into rehearsals," Richardson said. "But I think it's a great experience to do it at such a accelerated pace because you're there and you're in it everyday, which is every actor's dream — to be doing that and not anything else."

Though the show has been more difficult than previous Shakespearian shows, the cast and crew tackled the challenges.

"[It's] a problem play," Rubeck said. "But I hope we enjoy the problem."

Performances will be on Jan. 21-24 and Feb. 3-6 at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday to Friday, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in the Black Box in Roberts Studio Theatre.