

# Unexpected Visitor a pleasing talent showcase

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Seniors showcase talent in "The Unexpected Visitor" by Kristin Schneider

On Monday, Nov. 8, I had the pleasure of seeing a sneak preview of the upcoming production in Meredith's main stage series of plays. When I arrived at the Studio Theater, located on the bottom floor of the Jones building, I knew nothing of the play aside from its title, *The Unexpected Visitor*.

A quick glimpse of the hand-painted background led me to believe that the setting may be somewhere in Asia, an assumption which was confirmed when told that the play is an original production based on a Japanese folk tale.

I was also pleased to learn that the playwrights, Miyuki Kono and Heather Willcox, are senior theater students at Meredith. *The Unexpected Visitor*, a children's play, is the senior project for both Kono and Willcox. In addition, Kono serves as both the set and costume designer, while Willcox is the director of the play, the cast of which is comprised of Meredith students.

The atmosphere in the studio suggested that not only had a great deal of time and energy been put into the production, but a lot of pride as well. As the sound of the drum bellowed in the small room and the lights faded to black, the play began.

A narrator, dressed in an intricate Japanese costume, set the stage for the upcoming story. We are taken to a Japan-

ese island where Masato and Emi Tamura reside.

The married couple live a humble life as husband and wife, yet they feel incomplete without a child of their own. They long for the day when they can nurture and provide for a child, to offer someone a loving home and loving parents. As the play unfolds, one of two unexpected visitors arrives.

The tancho crane, the symbol of peace and prosperity in their land, is found in distress. Without hesitation, Masato Tamura frees the bird to flight.

Shortly thereafter, the second unexpected visitor is introduced. A young girl named Yuki finds herself at the Tamura home, and eventually becomes like a daughter to the loving couple. Warmth and kindness are reciprocated and the three seem to have found utter contentment as a family.

However, money is tight and conflict arises. The plot takes a turn as Yuki and the Tamuras become involved in mysterious plights and unplanned results.

What will happen to the Tamura family? Will Yuki be able to reside with them as their daughter? Will the characters remember the symbol that the beloved tancho crane represents? Who exactly is the un-

pected visitor?

The only way to discover the answers to these questions is to take the time to see this play. The whimsy and magic that can only be found in a children's drama make *The Unexpected Visitor* a memorable and enjoyable play.

The scenery, costumes, and performances in the play all looked very authentic. If the purpose of a play is to entertain and to evoke emotions, then this it is a definite success.

Careful detail and heartfelt pride seem to have been poured into the production, which includes performances by Jessica Dick (narrator), Jennifer Crocker (Masato Tamura), Tiffany Owoe (Emi Tamura), Kristin Patten (Yuki), Kristina Mazzola (merchant), Kelly Mutzabaugh (shopper), and Rebecca Allen (shopper). "The Unexpected Visitor" will be performed November 10th at 7:30 p.m., and November 11 through 13 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Admission is \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for students and

seniors, and is free for Meredith students, faculty, and staff. You may also reserve tickets by

calling 760 - 2840. Make time for the unexpected enjoyment you will find by seeing *The*



Meredith Performs presents *The Unexpected Visitor*, written and directed by Meredith students.

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