

Arts & Entertainment

Student Perspective: Whitney Way Thore Brings Body Positivity to Meredith

Laurie Diggett, Staff Writer

On September 13th 2016, Whitney Way Thore came to Meredith College to teach a dance class and give a talk. For many attending the 4pm dance lesson, it was merely a chance to dance with a professional and have fun. For others, however, it was an opportunity to rediscover ourselves and our capabilities. Thore showed us that we can do anything we set our minds to as long as we work for it and prove that we truly wanted to reach our goals.

When I first entered the auditorium, I looked around and thought there wasn't any way we were going to fit everyone on stage. So many people had shown up, but somehow we managed

to all fit on stage at once. Before we began, one of Thore's team members talked to us a bit about Thore's struggle with body shaming and self doubt in the past. Having struggled many years with bullying, an eating disorder and a terribly steep, uphill battle with weight loss, Thore had found sanctuary in the power of dance and began her No Body Shame campaign. After being given this short blurb about her, Thore came onto the stage and we didn't waste any time getting into the lesson. In class with Thore I felt motivated and engaged in dancing. She taught in a way that made moves come easily to me and helped me flow smoothly with the music. After

rehearsing a few times at the back of the entire group, I was ready to be in the front. I felt excitement from head to toe as we were split into four groups, all of which would be filmed dancing for Thore's show, *My Big Fat Fabulous Life*. The music started and I felt a sudden rush of adrenaline course through my body. I gave that final dance my all and enjoyed every second of it.

I soon realized that Thore was motivated by her love of dance and her unbreakable refusal to never let anyone take her passion away. Thore taught us that we cannot control anyone's opinion of ourselves except our own. We are our own biggest critic. Thore showed each and every one

of us that we are valid in being ourselves. Thore wants everyone to remind themselves who they are, and I plan to look in the mirror and validate myself everyday for the rest of my life.

Overall, Whitney Way Thore brings motivation and reason for individuality with every word she utters and every step she takes. Being able to dance with her and hear about her struggle with body-shaming and self-doubt will have an everlasting impact on my life and I encourage everyone to go to one of her events if at all possible. It will truly make you see yourself and the rest of society differently.

Why is Hollywood Still Obsessed with 'Whitewashing'?

Lauren Cannon, Staff Writer

Whitewashing, the act of casting white actresses and actors to play minority roles, remains one of the biggest controversies in Hollywood. Though it has sparked outrage for decades, Hollywood's filmmakers continue to cast these roles to Caucasians because they think this provides the widest appeal to audiences. Additionally, filmmakers have claimed that casting a minority as the lead role is too risky -- they don't want to spend millions creating a film with

a minority lead. However, research shows that movies with diversity typically do better in the box office. In *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, the female and minority leads led the film to success.

Hollywood's lack of diversity has gone on forever. For example, old-time Hollywood star Elizabeth Taylor was cast as the title role in *Cleopatra*. In more recent years, Christian Bale was cast as Moses in *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, and Disney cast the heartthrob Johnny

Depp as Native American, Tonto, in *The Lone Ranger*.

Recently, fans of Disney have expressed their concern over Disney's live-action remake of *Mulan*. Fans are worried that Disney will whitewash the remake, as the company has in the past. Several petitions were even created, one with over 100,000 signatures, aimed at persuading Disney to cast an Asian *Mulan*.

Whitewashing is sending harmful messages to the

audience; especially the younger generations who aren't seeing diversity represented. Additionally, Hollywood often characterizes those in minority groups as "bad guys" and immoral.

Ultimately, even after all the criticism, why does Hollywood continue to put on an ignorant facade when it comes to whitewashing?

Meredith's Ensemble Theatre Presents *Lysistrata*

Teresa Burton, Staff Writer

For the season opener, the Meredith College Ensemble Theatre will be presenting the Greek comedy *Lysistrata*, written by Aristophanes. The play is about the women of ancient Greece at the end of the Peloponnesian War who have decided to bring the war to its completion; however, director Catherine Rodgers has updated this classic. In this fresh new twist,

the story is brought forward to the time of the American Civil War, where *Lysistrata* (played by Victoria Mitchell) convinces the women of the community that they have their own role to play in ending the war. The show also highlights the work of several Meredith College students and faculty, including sound design and original music by freshwoman Maigan Kennedy. Kennedy's music

brings life to the play and pairs well with the choreography of senior Dielle McMillian. The bluegrass music and choreography brings energy to the fascinating sets of faculty designer Jenni Becker. Together, all the contributors to this production help to captivate its audience and bring us into their world. The production will be running from September 27 to

October 2 in the Meredith College Studio Theatre. *Lysistrata* is free for Meredith students and employees, \$10 general, \$5 students/seniors. Reservations can be made by calling 919-760-2840 or emailing boxoffice@meredith.edu. See <http://www.meredith.edu/theatre> for more information.

Movie Review: *Kubo and the Two Strings*

Carolina Brust, Staff Writer

If you must blink, do it now. Laika studios, creator of the 2009 animated film *Coraline* and the 2014 film *The Boxtrolls*, has just released its new animated, mythological feature *Kubo and the Two Strings*. Kubo (voiced by Art Parkinson), the son of a fallen warrior and star, lives in the side of mountain with his mother (voiced by Charlize Theron) above a sea side village. There, the two have

lived in hiding since his grandfather, the Moon King, stole his left eye as a baby and continues to hunt him down for his remaining eye. After his grandfather sends his aunts to find him, Kubo goes off on an adventure to find his father's golden armour to face off against the Moon King. Aided by a monkey talisman and an amnesiac warrior named Beetle (voiced by Matthew McConaughey), Kubo learns more

about his past and his growing powers.

Despite the limited amount of diversity in the cast, the film makes up for it with a stunning instrumental soundtrack and detailed Japanese backdrop. Inspired by Japanese folklore and art, Laika Studios weaves a colorful world of origami, magic, music, as a backdrop to the theme of finding home when you least expect it. From the first

minute, the audience is pulled in with eye popping visuals, a fantastic mixture of woodwork, yarn puppetry, and computer generated imagery that breathe life into our heroes. Finishing fourth in the box office, this film is a treat for all ages and will be sure to leave you at the edge of your seat. No matter if you're five or fifty, this film brings out the warrior in all of us.