

# Arts & Entertainment

## Decision Height At Its Height This Week

Tishya Robertson, Staff Writer

The curtain opened at the Studio Theatre last night for Meredith Ensemble Theatre's production of *Decision Height*, a play by Meredith Danya Levy about World War II's female pilots in the WASP training program. Performances of *Decision Height* are Sept. 26-30 at 7:30 p.m. and October 1 at 3:00 p.m. in the Studio Theatre in Jones Hall.

These civilian women in the WASP program were not technically in the military, but participated to help the men who were fighting overseas in WWII. The women left their families and past lives to learn to fly military planes. *Decision Height* follows the successes and failures of six female trainees in Sweetwater, Texas at Avenger Fields.

Senior Theatre Education major Victoria Mitchell plays Norma Jean Harris, the motherly figure of the group who left behind her teaching position to become the squadron commander of the group while her husband was fighting in the war in Japan. "She is confident, a know-it-all at times, and needs to be taken down a peg or two sometimes" Mitchell says. She sees a lot of herself in her character since she plans

on becoming a theatre teacher, and Norma Jean is the "confident teacher" in the play.

Victoria Mitchell has previously played many awkward roles where her characters provided comedic relief, so she enjoys the new challenge that is an "emotional rollercoaster to say the least." Norma Jean experiences a large character arc throughout the play, and Mitchell appreciates the dramatic shift her character experiences. Because this is Mitchell's next-to-last role in Meredith Ensemble Theatre, she has been researching extensively for her major while reflecting on her time at Meredith, saying "I am very sad, but I am glad that this is the show that I am doing my senior role with because it is all about sisterhood and the relationships that form. The end of the play is their graduation from the program, so it is relevant to my senior year at Meredith College."

Some of her favorite things about the play include the character relationships between Norma Jean and Eddie, as well as the costumes. Norma Jean and Eddie's interactions as opposite people evolve throughout the play. The costumes in the play reflect

what the female pilots in the WASP training program wore; Mitchell describes some of them as "Rosie the Riveter-esque."

She also dons lingerie for a scene in their living quarters.

Mitchell believes that this play should be seen by others because "these women paved the way for other women in the military and women's accomplishments in general and their story is sometimes forgotten. They didn't get military status until 1977, and they were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal in 2010, so I think it's really important that we're showcasing their lives and showing how important these women really are."

Director Steven Roten finds the play relevant to others, stating, "Largely, the play is



Photo Courtesy of Michael Fedder.

about the relationships that those women forge in going through this experience in serving something greater than themselves. [The women] have given up their own lives, put them on hold to make them a better place, and at the end, though they are changed forever, return to their lives fundamentally changed."

Performances are currently in full swing, and the playwright will be giving a talk with the audience after Friday's performance. Meredith students, faculty, and staff are admitted free of charge. General admission is \$10 and \$5 for non-Meredith students and seniors.

## Personal Stories: A Review of the Art Department Faculty & Staff Exhibition

Annie Poslusny, Contributing Writer

Are you curious about what an artist finds inspiration in? Or what is the point of visual art anyway?

Currently on display in Meredith's Frankie G. Weems Art Gallery in Gaddy-Hamrick is an exhibition of the work created by nineteen members of the faculty and staff of the art department in a variety of media. Each piece represents a personal story of its creator, and causes you to reflect on the challenges and significance of life. A striking piece was that of Mark Iwinski called *Opus Magnum*. It is a wood block white ink image of the center portion of a tree on hand made indigo kenshi paper.

The cross-shaped canvas is of the richest, deepest indigo. The delicate, thin paper is in high contrast with the ghostly white ink image of the center cut of a 150-year-old tree. I was struck by the irony of a 150-year-old tree reduced to a tissue-like piece of paper to create art. Did the cross-like structure suggest the tree was sacrificed for art? For urban expansion? Will the art created by the loss of the tree last 150 years? I thought about all the years of history that tree had been a silent witness to, and now all that was left was this ghostly image.

A work which proved to be both repellent and attractive

simultaneously was that of Carrie Alter, called *Appendage*. It is a graphite drawing on banana paper of an intestine-like form. The structure intertwines, overlaps itself, and has three bulbous projections. The bulbous projection on top resembles a humanoid in profile. In its ugliness, I found fascination. My eyes were drawn over and around, through twists and turns, searching for meaning. The closer I looked trying to understand it, the more I reflected on the experience of looking. I grew comfortable with not knowing what it was, and reflected on what it meant to me. The lack of linear progression, the overlapping,

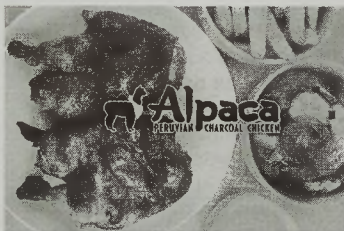
twisting, backtracking is a lot like our journey through life. The bumpy, tangled mess leads us somewhere. At the end of it all we wind up on top, owning all our experiences, whether they are light or dark, ugly or beautiful. Ultimately, they are uniquely ours, and that is what creates meaning.

This exhibition closes on Sunday, Oct. 1, 2017. For more information, check out the Art Department's Gallery Exhibition page.

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## Loco Por Alpacas

Carolina Brust, Staff Writer



With NC State, Meredith, and William Peace scattered around, Raleigh is chock full of cheap restaurants to satisfy the cash-strapped college student. It is forever growing with new places opening up regularly to cater to

any tastes. One restaurant in particular stands out among the rest: Alpaca Peruvian Charcoal Chicken. Formerly known as "Mama Nori's," Alpaca's is a Peruvian restaurant with rotisserie chicken as far as the eye can see. The home page boasts, "Our all natural chickens are hormone free, local and free of all major FDA allergies (peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, fish, shellfish, milk, soy and gluten)."

Mama Nori's used to be a household name in North Durham, run under Mama Nori herself, who is a lovely woman in

person and happy to talk about her home country. She recently left the restaurant to her children, who rebranded and expanded the business to three new locations in Durham, Cary, and Raleigh.

One can order a simple plate of meat, veggies, rice, and fries (*pollo saltado*) for under \$10. Or one can share an entire chicken with your suitemates with two large sides for a little over \$16. If you're in the mood for dessert, enjoy some flan (*caramel jello*) for \$1.95. The food is flavorful and authentic without breaking the bank. The staff is also friendly and

quick to give you your food. The atmosphere is vibrant and colorful, always playing Spanish music and the latest fútbol (soccer) game on their flat screen TVs.

Peruvian food is scarce in North Carolina, so finding a decent restaurant in Raleigh is a treat for any born Peruvians and the occasional adventurous eater. With the Raleigh location less than 20 minutes away, it's perfect for a late night study session, tailgating, or a Friendsgiving dinner. Check out their menu at: [www.alpacachicken.com/menu.html](http://www.alpacachicken.com/menu.html) and visit them at 4614 Capital Boulevard.