

THE HILLTOP

Volume 67, Issue 10 • Serving The Students Of Mars Hill College Since 1926 • Feb. 24, 1994 • FREE, Please Take One

The Greatest Story Ever Told Cotton Patch Gospel Coming to MHC

From Staff Reports

Mars Hill College will present Cotton Patch Gospel Thurs. March 3 at 8 p.m. in Moore Auditorium as part of the 1993-94 Culturefest Series.

Cotton Patch Gospel has been highly acclaimed by critics and the public alike. This award winning musical drama is considered to be a very enjoyable story that retells the Gospels of Matthew and John - translated into present day Southern vernacular. It brings the far away places of Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem closer to home - Atlanta and Valdosta, Georgia. From His birth in a Gainesville, Georgia trailer to His Good Friday lynching and Easter Sunday victory, the story of Mary Davidson's son, Jesus, is presented musically with zest and uninhibited joy.

Cotton Patch Gospel was first conceived by Tom Key as a one-man play based on the idea of a contemporary "Matthew" telling the story of Jesus as though he were born in Gainesville, Georgia. Key performed this play, enacting all 21 characters of the story, on a national concert-artist series tour in 1980. He adapted the play using Dr. Clarence Jordan's New Testament "Cotton Patch" Paraphrases. In 1981, Key teamed with Drama Desk Award Winner Russell Tray as director and co-author, Broadway Producer Philip Getter, and the late singer-songwriter Harry Chapin to develop "Cotton patch" into a five-person musical with the last 18 songs Chapin wrote serving as the musical score. Several months after Chapin's tragic car accident, brother Tom Chapin, as musical director for the project, guided it musically on to the October, 1981 off-Broadway premiere at the Lamba Theatre where it ran to rave reviews for 200 performances. It garnered a Drama-Logue Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre and inspired an NBC Special, "Harry Chapin's Cotton Patch." It also played the Westwood Playhouse Theatre in Los Angeles where Key was nominated "Best Actor" by the L.A. Drama Critics' Circle. It broke attendance records in Dallas, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia and won personal acclaim from celebrities such as Greer Garson, Pat Carroll, Larry Gatlin, Jimmy Carter and many more. Its script was published by Dramatic Publishing Company, which sold out of its first "Cotton Patch" printing in record time. It is still performed by thousands of amateur stock theatre companies, as well as presented by notable professional theatre companies (the Walnut Street Playhouse of Philadelphia, the Cleveland Playhouse, the Indianapolis Repertory Theatre) and plans are underway for its London Premiere at the Westminster Theatre.

"Cotton Patch Gospel is special. It is a rare dramatic presentation that succeeds in both entertaining us and sharing fresh insight in to the Gospel - the greatest story ever told" - Alkahest Agency

Students will be admitted without charge with a valid MHC ID, but you will need a ticket to this green card event. Tickets can be picked up at Owen Box Office Mon.-Fri. from 1-5 p.m.



Feels Like Spring (above). Last week, students got a nice change from the coldest winter in memory. Here, Kelly Brown enjoys the peace of the quad while doing a little sketching. Giving the Gift (below). While some were out enjoying the sun, others braved the needle to help others in need at the DKT/Red Cross Blood Drive.



This Week

Opinions

Welcome to The Devils' Advocate as the Master of Mephistopheles challenges the limits of your mind. BabbleOn describes a Dim Future, while Webb gives us a few sayings to live by. A letter on the loss of a loved one prompts us to think about our own lives.

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Features

Safety and Security get a new image, the annual service convocation is coming up, and Irish history is detailed in a book by an MHC professor.

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The History Honor Society is making attempts at revitalization, and "Fate" opens at Owen Theatre.

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THE HILLTOP CLASSIFIEDS & Personals

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