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Seniors take to the stage, call it their own

BY BROOKE BLOOMQUIST
Staff Writer

Audiences will have an opportunity to view a selection of one-act plays directed by senior drama students in late March in Chance Cousins Auditorium at 7:30 pm. Exact dates have not yet been chosen due to conflicts with band and chorus trips since several students will be involved in these other activities.

Seniors have been making directorial debuts annually at Grimsley since the 1970s. The young directors assume responsibility for setting up rehearsal times, auditioning cast members, and overseeing all aspects of preparing the plays for show time. Those involved embrace the opportunity as a trial to see if they can handle the pressure and to determine if directing is truly their career choice for the future.

Several of the senior drama students take the International Baccalaureate (IB) Theatre Arts course, so those directing use this experience for their required individual projects; however, any Playmaster can apply to direct their own play.

"Seniors who wish to direct find the plays they want to do and clear them with me," said drama teacher Richard Zaruba. His involvement is to function as the

producer, coordinating rehearsal times, managing technical details, and ensuring that productions run smoothly for the directors.

"Financing of shows works the way it does for any Playmasters show—money raised from prior shows funds these. Proceeds from these shows fund the next," said Zaruba.

Depending upon the number of plays, all shows will be presented on both nights.

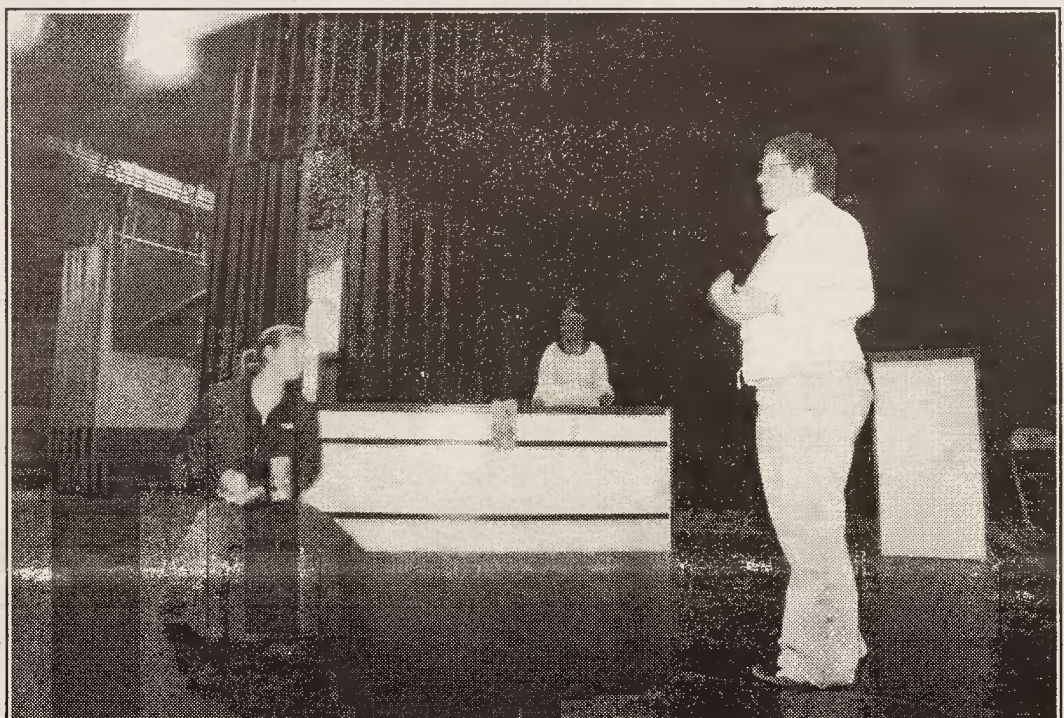
"If we have more than we need, we use a festival approach," said Zaruba, which means rotating performances on different nights.

Matt Taylor, Teddi Burnett, Costen Warner, David Tookey, and Amanda Oha all have stepped up to the challenge. Their first obstacle to overcome is finding cast members because so many of the drama students are directing these plays. Therefore, they are seeking younger students to play the various roles.

Taylor is directing "The End," "a surrealist take of life, death, and the afterlife. Characters include G-d and the devil with scenes taking place in heaven and hell," said Taylor.

Teddi Burnett's directing debut will be a parody of "Cinderella" called "Final Dress Rehearsal."

"When I read it as a freshman, I was blown away by



Senior Teddi Burnett directs seniors Liz Fletcher and Evita Freeman in "Final Dress Rehearsal," stressing breathing techniques, the importance of remaining in character and the effectiveness of good blocking. Theatre fans can enjoy the one-act plays in March, directed by seniors and produced by drama teacher Richard Zaruba

the images that came into my mind. It was playing out in my head, and I knew I would have to direct it eventually," said Burnett.

Cast members include seniors Evita Freeman, Katherine Valchar, Liz Fletcher, Ava Michelle Brewer, and Nathan Milholin. Junior Ashley Wolf and freshmen Olivia Campbell, Sarah Jacobs, Nicole Iman, and Mary Baynard also perform in the play.

Because of the numerous people involved, "Blocking was my biggest obstacle. It was an interesting process

getting everyone set on stage," said Burnett.

Novice directors Costen Warner and David Tookey are collaborating on their project. They wrote "Untitled Self-Written One Act," and both co-star in the play and direct it. Other cast members include senior Danielle Lee and junior Janie Sizemore.

"Our biggest obstacle was our script, but once Costen and I finished it, worked out the kinks, and made it sound realistic, it was smooth sailing," said Tookey.

"The Campout" is the play Amanda Oha will direct

"Dahlia Gutterman and I were talking about what we would do for our senior projects, and we thought it would be great if she wrote a play and I directed it," said Oha.

Juniors Ashley Oha, Brittany Windham, and Patrick Cassidy comprise the cast. All three students are inexperienced in stage performance.

"This will be my first time directing," said Oha, so directing them will be challenging yet gratifying for Amanda, especially since her younger sister is one of her protégés.

Patterson named fourth poet laureate

BY HALEY PHILLIPS
News Editor

Senior Alex Patterson recently became Grimsley's fourth poet laureate in this year's annual contest. Patterson was chosen from a field of fifteen aspiring poets for duties that include reading at graduation and promoting poetry in a high school environment. Other finalists included senior Lizzie Chadbourne and junior Amy Allen.

"It is a collaborative effort between the Greensboro Public Library,

friends of the library, and the media coordinators from the different schools. All high schools in the county are encouraged to participate. We invite private schools to participate also, and each year about 12 to 14 high schools participate," said librarian Kate Cummings, who helped coordinate the event.

The competition results in the creation of a book featuring the work of poets laureate from schools throughout the county.

"At each high school they advertise, put it out to the whole student

body to anybody who wants to enter, and then each person who enters has to submit three original poems and those entries are read by the judges, who narrow it down to three poets," said Cummings.

Judges of the recent contest included English teacher Evan Post, former English teacher and UNCG professor Matthew McNées, and 2004 poet laureate Travis Diehl. Entries were then sent to Jennifer Grotz, a published poet and a professor at UNCG, who selected the winning poet.

"At first, I didn't want to apply because I don't like literary contests, but Ms. Cummings encouraged me to submit some of my writing. I really appreciate the judges who took the time to read my work, along with the poetry from many other students. It's really an honor to be named Poet Laureate, but at the same time, I'm nervous about writing a poem for graduation and reading it in front of so many people, said Patterson.

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