

# 'Shadowbox' Showcases Talent, Believability of Undergrad Actors

Three terminally ill people struggling with family and friends and coming to terms with their own mortality are the focus of "The Shadowbox," the Department of Dramatic Art's heart-wrenching fall production.

Under faculty member Susanna Rinehart's sensitive direction, the undergraduate cast vividly addresses such issues as the loneliness, fear, alienation, anger and even embarrassment inescapable in the face of painful and seemingly undesired death.

On a beautifully lit set designed by Craig Pettigrew and Katherine L. McCauley depicting three cottages on the grounds of a large hospital, the characters' attempts to come to terms with their concerns about death are the threads pulling along the well-paced action.

In the opening scene, middle-aged Joe awaits the arrival of his wife Maggie and son Steve. He expresses his excitement and uncertainty about their visit to an unseen

interviewer (John O'Brien). As each of the dying characters is interviewed about their states of mind and health, it becomes apparent that these meetings provide the framework around which the plot is woven.

Christopher Johnson was wonderfully believable as a warm-voiced, down-to-earth Joe, complemented by the performance of Jack Dillon, who played the energetic and painfully oblivious Steve. Lisa Bowers (Maggie), however, seemed at times much too young for her role, offsetting the believability of the scene. But as Joe and Maggie relived the loss of frustrated dreams, trying to find a way to tell Steve that his much-admired dad was dying, Bowers grew as much as her character did, becoming much more believable in her struggle to accept the implications of Joe's mortality.

Meanwhile, Brian, a hyper-intellectual failed writer played with moving candor and sardonic humor by a deliberate-voiced Mac Rogers, finds himself dying, caught between the drunken escapism of his vivacious ex-wife Beverly and the painful realism of his young lover Mark, an ex-street hustler played to the impetuous-youth hilt

by Joshua Thompson. Jordana Davis was also excellent in her role as the alcoholic Beverly, becoming increasingly unstrung physically and mentally, yet ultimately wise and sympathetic as the champagne flowed. Their often explosive exploration of the nature of death and dependence on and independence from others was at once comic and brutal as well as especially realistic. Equally moving was the dilemma of Felicity and Agnes, a mother and daughter brought together and driven apart by the former's mental and physical deterioration. Although this theme seemed a bit over-familiar, Erin Cottrell (lovely as the painfully dutiful Agnes) and Amy Amerson (a stunningly real elderly Felicity) seem to have really sunk into the skin of their characters, bringing profound humanity to their roles.

"The Shadowbox" is a production marked by its humanity. As each of the characters hurtle towards an unknown, inevitably sad future, they come to find the importance and hope of having known the joy of living and of each other. They learn the bittersweet lesson, articulated by Brian, that "if I am dying, I must still be alive."

## MASALA

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within Asia, and very elaborate. ASA was followed with a fun, energetic presentation by CHispa called "Un Mundo Unido," or "A World United." CHispa featured fashions and music from all areas of Latin America, traditional to modern, combined with an oral presentation and a lot of salsa dancing.

The Carolina Indian Circle presented a solemn contrast to "Un Mundo Unido" in a program called "Native Collage." Traditional tribal clothing as well as modern-day "pow-wow attire" were featured.

Next came the Hellenic Students' Association, presenting clothing from ancient Greece and the island of Crete, among other areas. The outfits were detailed and colorful and provided a glimpse of the little-known modern Greek culture.

Sangam chose a slightly different theme for their program entitled "South Asian Romance." The presentation centered around interaction between men and women through the ages and featured songs that told stories of courtship, rejection and

eventual love. The specific theme gave Sangam's presentation focus, and their fashions gave the entire program more style.

The Black Students' Movement followed with an extensive program called "Young, Gifted and Black," which seemed to be the favorite of the audience.

The presentation was smooth and thorough, presenting clothing from the important historical movements, such as the Harlem Renaissance. Host India Williams, a sophomore from Raleigh, summed up the program with the words, "Even though we are constantly moving forward, we must never forget from whence we came."

The final group, cONcEpt of colors, brought the entire program together in their presentations "Retro is In" and "A Photoshoot." cONcEpt is a multicultural modeling group whose mission is to promote cross-cultural learning and unity.

They presented a brief profile of diverse styles within America in the format of a professional fashion show and photoshoot.

"It wasn't at all what I expected," said Megan McLean, a freshman from Charlotte. "It blew my mind, and I think opened it a lot to other cultures."

## BPWA

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bring attention to the plight of minority workers. "I'm very happy about (the endorsement)," he said. "This reflects the fact that I've demonstrated a commitment to lower-paid workers and to eliminating discrimination of those workers."

Foy also said he thought this endorsement gave a new perspective to his campaign for the mayor's office. "I am glad about the endorsement because it (the BPWA) shows a fresh way of looking at things that might benefit the town."

The BPWA endorsements were based on responses to a questionnaire, public statements at a forum sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and from reviews of the public records of every candidate.

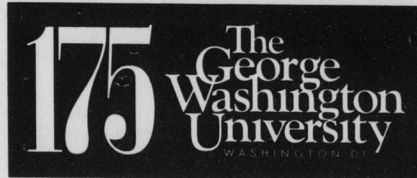
One of the main questions from the campaign questionnaire proposed holding public hearings to inform the community of the history of public treatment of black workers. Chilton and Foy supported the proposal in their responses. Franck endorsed alternative time-efficient measures.

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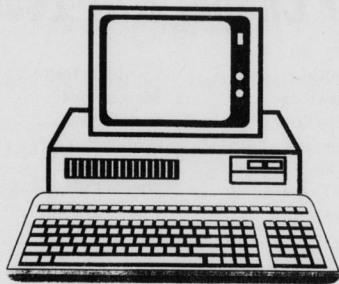
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