One-Act performance prompts thoughts of standing ovation

The following article contains the opinions of the author.

By Kasey Smith
Reporter

Perhaps a standing ovation is inappropriate at a dress rehearsal. Had I not suspected this was the case, Kathleen Christal's performance in "Snowangel" would certainly have compelled me to do so.

Lewis John: Carmello's humorous and moving play is one of six offered at this weekend's One-Act Play Festival at the Performing Arts Center. The week offers five student-directed plays and one reader's theater.

Christal, an Arts senior, portrays an aging and unattractive prostitute credibly and sensitively. Portraying John, the prostitute's trick, co-star Grant Garinger is equally capable, although his role does not demand the attention Christal's did.

Hasbeen hooker

"Snowangel" begins with the hasbeen hooker attempting, unsuccessfully, to cheaply seduce her umpteenth customer and get him out the door.

As the play evolves, we see Connie (Christal) getting not-too quietly smashed and blatantly impatient with John's tedious "search for affection."

John is not the sole possessor of precious memories, we discover, and a softer side to the hard-shelled Connie is exposed.

Significant change occurs within each character during the course of the play. Because of actors Garinger and Christal, director Frank Kosnicky and the playwright, the change is fluid and touching.

"Carmellaaroons," a play written and directed by Bill Cook, is more subtly humorous and symbolically tragic.

Unfortunate transformation

The three-character play depicts the unfortunate transformation of a dream-chasing girl into a generic conformist.

Cook had stated "Carmellaaroons" intended to ask why people allow outside forces to dictate their lives. It does this and much more, I believe, quite successfully.

"Identity Crisis," like "Carmellaaroons," is about social conformity. It is a carefully choreographed whirlwind of absurdities that, while ever-confusing, is oddly entertaining.

Because she can no longer distinguish reality from fiction, main character Jane Carrott surrenders herself to a seemingly more sane insanity.

Also playing at the festival is "The Odyssey," "The Ugly Duckling," a reader's theater performance of "The Elephant Man."

"The Odyssey," "Identity Crisis," "Snowangel" and "Ugly Duckling" will be shown tonight starting at 8. Saturday's 8 p.m. show features "The Elephant Man," "Ugly Duckling," "Snowangel" and "Carmellaaroons."

That the festival is worth seeing is unquestionable. Much time, effort and, most notable, talent, has gone into these productions.