New York actor Henry Wright brought Gerard Manley Hopkins back to life on Thursday, transforming the Performing Arts Center into Westminster Abbey before a crowd of 1,000.

"Immortal Diamond," a one-man show about Hopkins, was sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and the Performing Arts department. It was a continuation of the "A Veneration of Gerard Manley Hopkins" series.

The play is set in Westminster Abbey, where Hopkins is immortalized among Poets Corner. Wright's interpretation of Hopkins throughout the play, balancing joyous revelry in the beauty with quiet, more somber themes on the fragility of life.

Wright, a Williams College alumnus, brought his love of verse and knowledge of Jesuit tradition into weaving excerpts of poetry with conversational recollections for the audience.

He brought humor into the script to convey the serious nature of Hopkins' life. Without that humor, the performer may have, like Hopkins, broken down and drained away to an early death.

Unlike British productions featuring Hopkins, Wright and Casey found an American flavor for their audiences.

One part of the performance compared Hopkins' life to that of Emily Dickinson. Both felt a certain amount of isolation and died in relative obscurity. Wright spoke without an accent, making Hopkins' difficult phrasing and sound patterns easier to follow.

Wright delivered the 80 minutes of script, varying widely from torrents of tongue twister verse to warm, personal humor. He commanded the stage with impressiveness. The lighting provided the focus and variety that is important in a one-man show.

The direction, in the seasoned hands of Bill Cain, pointed out the struggle in young Hopkins' vocational turmoil.

After one scheduled Creighton performance, "Immortal Diamond" closed with exuberant applause from the audience. It can be considered one of the theatrical highlights of the year.