

ENTERTAINMENT

Comedic Chaos

■ **CURTAIN RAISED:** Drama students take center stage, put on their first attempt at a play within a play.

BY ROGER QUINTANILLA
Assistant Entertainment Editor

After last year's stunning performance of *High School Musical*, this year's drama production was yet another great success. The play took stage on Dec. 3, 4, and 5 in the auditorium. *Noises Off* by Michael Frayn is a comedy about a play within a play.

Basically, the play is about seven British actors, who begin by rehearsing their script for their play *Nothing On*, then is continued by backstage scenes, and finishes off with them performing their play in front of your eyes.

Consisting of three acts, the first act started surprisingly slow for a comedy. The effect of a play within a play immediately set itself as the manager, Lloyd Garrison (Rene Lopez) began to give directions to Dotty Otley (Anna Avoyan).

Halfway through the opening act, when there were six "actors" among eight performers, a seventh appeared portraying the role of Selsdon. Selsdon, the comic relief, was played brilliantly by Argisht Ovsepyan and proves to be the crowd favorite.

The second act got the ball rolling as stage crew flipped the set around, showing us its backside, woodwork and all. With little dialogue and plenty of body movement, the second act showed the affairs and love interests of the director and the different actors. As they attempted to put on the play within the play, "backstage" character

tensions were revealed as Garry (Robert Manukyan) attempted to kill his co-worker Frederick (Hike Hambarsoomian) with a fire axe. Much of the play's humor comes from the incredible use of props including flowers, whisky bottles, and even a cactus.

As the second intermission ended, the stage was once again turned around. For its final act, the front of the set would be used to show the battering of the inside play, *Nothing On*. While the first act showed the lines and cues of the characters, the second showed the backstage errors of the actors, and the third showed the errors on the actual set.

Stage manager Maryam Golabian commented on the play saying, "We actually had wanted to carry this play out a lot in the past. Then when we finally decided to go through with it, we were really nervous about performing the play because we didn't know if we could make the audience understand the whole "play within a play" setup after opening night, we felt a lot more confident."

With missed cues, forgotten lines, and plain bad timing the last act proved to be a hysterical and outright frantic sight. As Brooke (Aimee Donabedian) loses her contacts on stage, Tim (Fadi Khabbaz), Lloyd, and Selsdon take the role of a single robber, and Mrs. Clackett (again played by Anna Avoyan) cooks her sardines, the audience is kept on the edge of their seats in anticipation of what will come next.



Photo Courtesy of Stylus

SHOCK: Robert Manukyan, Hike Hambarsoomian, and Aimee Donabedian gather around Anna Avoyan to confront her about the problem.

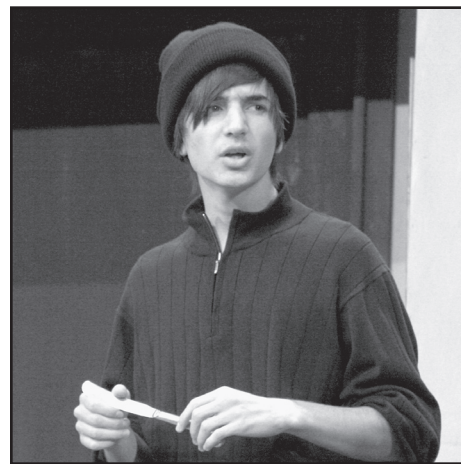


Photo Courtesy of Stylus

SARDINES: Argisht Ovsepyan steals the show with his comedy.



Photo Courtesy of Stylus

PANTS?: Hike Hambarsoomian is on the ground, tired, after running.

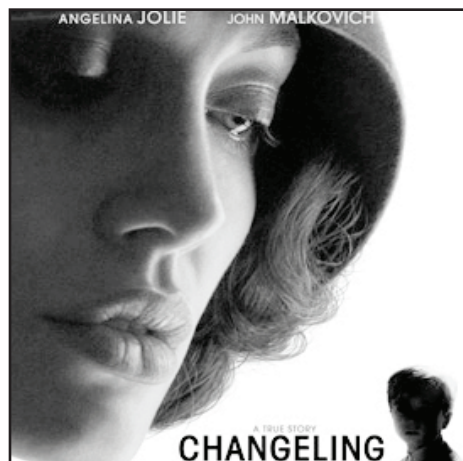
Season's Screenings

■ **BOX OFFICE HITS:** Grab your popcorn, shush your friends, and watch closely as Hollywood works its magic.

BY TENY AGHAZARIAN &
BETTY CHALJIAN
Staff Reporter

Released on Nov. 26 was the adventurous, dramatic, love story *Australia*. The movie tells the story of Lady Sarah Ashley (Nicole Kidman, an Aussie playing a Brit who goes to Australia) and her love affair with Drover (Hugh Jackman). They conquer the challenge of fighting against the backdrop of sinister cattle rustlers who attempted to throw Ashley out of her land and take her profits.

In the movie, there is the touching story of a little boy with mixed blood, who serves as a symbol for the stolen generations and racism. The film is fine, and never boring, but it is overlong. At a drawn out amount of 165 minutes, it feels too much like a work-in-progress. There is a lot of narrative flab in the first two hours and the film often has the pace of a steamroller with engine trouble. Either way, the movie kept the audience talking.

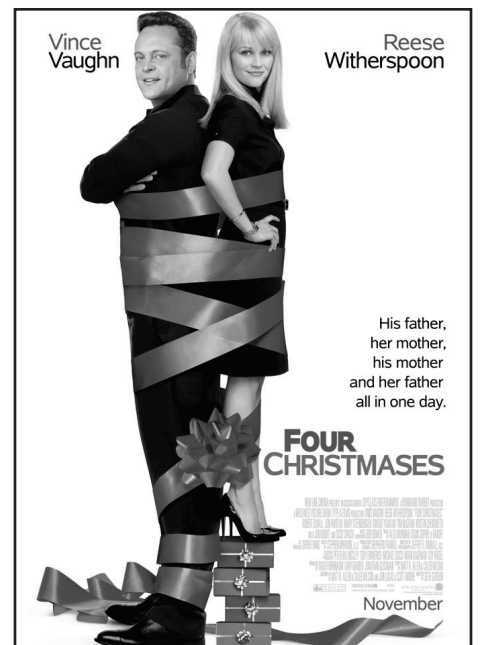


Changeling, released on Oct. 31, is a must see movie. Based on a true story set in the 1920s-era in L.A., it tells the story of a woman driven to confront a corrupted LAPD officer after her abducted son is retrieved. She begins to suspect that the boy returned to her is not really her son. Saying goodbye to her son Walter (Gattlin Griffith), Christine (Angelina Jolie) departs for work, not realizing that her life would soon change forever.

She comes home to find her son missing. After a few months pass, the desperate mother launches a search for her son. Just when it seems that all hope is lost, a little boy claiming to be Christine's son appears out of thin air. Uncertain how to face the authorities or the press, Christine takes the child home knowing that he is not her son. Christine puts her life in danger by battling the case in order to expose the corrupt actions of the LAPD. I extremely recommend this movie to those that enjoy dramatic mind-boggling films.

Another ever so anticipated film was the film adaptation of *Twilight* which hit theaters on Nov. 21. This box office smash included the leading roles of Bella Swan and Edward Cullen, which were graced by Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson. The story of *Twilight* begins when Bella moves to the rainy little town of Forks, Washington. Here she meets the mysterious Edward, who holds a dark secret.

As they fall in love, Edward warns Bella that she should leave him because he is dangerous. She soon learns his secret that he is a vampire. However, she is not afraid of his blood-lust and the fact that he could kill her at any moment. The thrill begins when a new vampire finds it a challenge to hunt Bella down. The game is on, and the new vampire, James (Cam Gigandet), will not stop until she is killed. I myself was excited for this movie, and it didn't disappoint me. I highly recommend everyone to go see this movie. I enjoyed EVERY moment of it.



Four Christmases, which premiered on Nov. 26, is about a couple, Brad (Vince Vaughn) and Kate (Reese Witherspoon) who come across many challenges during the holidays. As a yearly tradition, they fly to Fiji for Christmas, except things changed, when the flights are all canceled. Their families spot them on the news and call to invite them over.

Out of obligation they go to not one, not two, but four relative-choked houses, scared to find childhood fears raised, wounds reopened, and their future together uncertain. As Brad counts the hours to when he can get away from both his and Kate's parents, siblings, and assortment of nieces and nephews, Kate starts to hear the ticking of a different kind of clock. By the end of the day, she begins to wonder whether their crazy families' choices are crazy after all. I wouldn't highly recommend this movie. It was a typical, you-know-what's-going-to-happen-next comedy movie. I was expecting something much better.

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