

CAMPUS THEATRE

# Behrend production *Alice* still stable despite students' decisions to drop play

EVAN KOSER  
culture editor

With the performance of the Behrend student play *Alice: Tales of a Curious Girl* only a few weeks from opening night, two students have unexpectedly jumped ship on the production.

*Alice* is an unfamiliar take on the familiar tale of *Alice in Wonderland*. Sophomores Kathryn Kotlarz and Earl Kunsman have both dropped the performance from their schedules due to time constraints.

"I was far behind in my classes," said Kunsman, a biology major.

This semester, Kunsman is enrolled with 17 credits and is currently seeking membership with a fraternity, certainly a heavy workload on top of almost 12 hours of theatre rehearsal per week.

Aside from the hours, Kotlarz was dealing with stress.

"I just couldn't deal with it," said Kotlarz, a nutrition major currently enrolled with 15 credits. "I mean, with school and personal issues, I just couldn't give enough time to the play."

Many students base their decision to partake in extracurriculars on their prospective schedules; Kotlarz and Kunsman are no different.

"When I auditioned, I believed that I could do [the play] up until last Thursday," said Kotlarz.

Kunsman held a similar view. "In the beginning, I actually figured it'd just be the same as

last semester," he said. "But a lot of the personal reasons hit me so suddenly."

Kunsman also fell behind in his classes when he had to leave campus for family issues.

"I was really sick for a while too," he said, "and leaving for home put me behind."

Kunsman explained that while he loves being a part of the thespian culture, it was an imperative decision between doing well in classes or involv-

ing himself with his passion.

"Leaving the theatre was heart-breaking for me," he said. "It's a passion of mine. I mean, I know I had to in order to succeed in my college career."

Kotlarz' situation parallels Kunsman's in many aspects. Both students have performed in past Behrend shows, but Kotlarz explains that balancing school work and the plays is always hard work.

"It's never gone easy," Kotlarz said. "But it's been manageable in the past. Last semester, I didn't bother trying out because I knew I wasn't going to be able to handle

**"It's difficult choosing between something you love to do and something you have to do."**

KATHRYN KOTLARZ  
sophomore nutrition major

it." While Kotlarz didn't have to tend to pressing issues at home, she found it difficult transitioning from a few hours to nearly 12 hours per week of rehearsal.

"It was easy in the beginning because we only had rehearsals once or twice a week for a couple hours," she said. "But I had to make a choice."

"I do feel bad for leaving

everyone else," Kotlarz said. "Especially because it's something that I love. But I knew I made the right choice."

Because the production is just a few weeks away, it's too late to fill the roles with new performers. Thus, current actors are having to fill in the roles.

Kotlarz and Kunsman both expressed their disdain in their decisions, referring to it as the "lesser of two evils."

"I'm really hoping to do the shows again next semester," said Kunsman. "I know I'll be pledging, so I'm going to have to manage my time better."

Kotlarz advises that all students keep from getting "too stressed out."

"Make sure you can drop something if you have to," she said. "Don't take on too much and always know your limits."

"It's difficult when you have to choose between something you love to do and something you have to do," said Kotlarz.

The performance of *Alice: Tales of a Curious Girl* is still scheduled to open on Nov. 12, despite this minor setback. Tickets for the performance will be available to students and the public in the coming weeks.

THE PLAYLIST



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

*Fluent In Stroll* peaked at 22 spot on the *Top Heatseekers* chart, making it one of the best-selling albums from an up and coming artist.

## Strollin' to Big D and the Kids' Table

JEFF KRAMER  
caps editor

When a band at the core of a genre deviates from the sound it has developed, more often than not, fans will riot. We've seen it everywhere from Green Day to Metallica.

This summer, the popular ska band Big D and the Kids' Table released its sixth studio album, *Fluent In Stroll*. The Boston group has impressed listeners frequently, and this new disc is no different. The interesting thing is that *Fluent In Stroll* is not ska. Big D has effectively created a new genre, "stroll," that is more flow-driven than ska.

The ska genre originated in Jamaica and was invented long before reggae. In modern ska, the drums emphasize off-beats while the guitar emphasizes not only the off-beats, but the final three beats as well. *Fluents In Stroll* flirts heavily with the ska sound, but again, it is not ska.

So how did the ska community feel about this deviation from the formula? The response couldn't have been more positive, which speaks about both the talent of Big D and the Kids' Table and the audience listening to it. People who listen to ska are happier, more relaxed, and more open than other music fans.

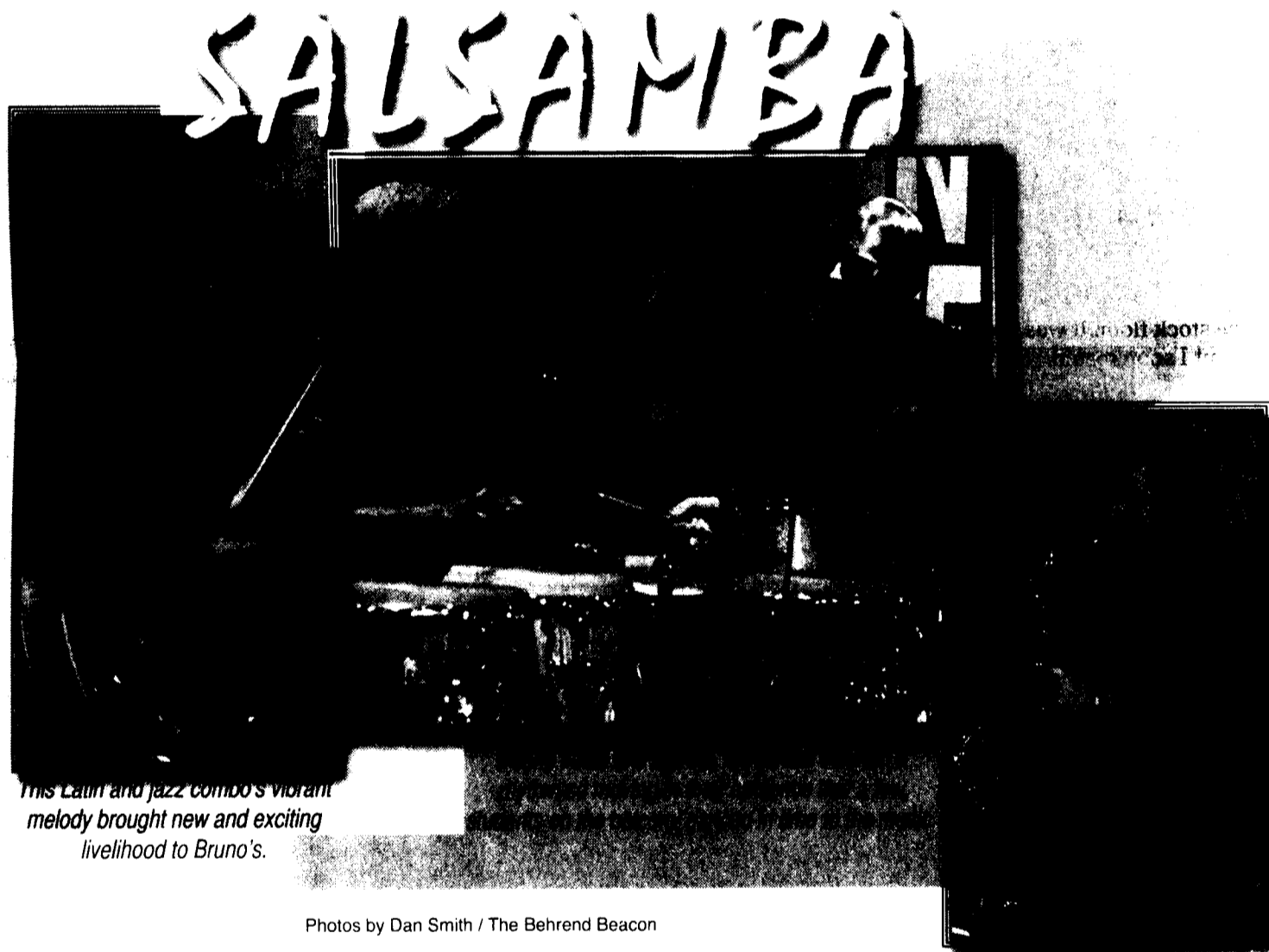
Some songs that at first don't seem very appealing, such as "A Kiss a Week," are so damn catchy that you can't not tap your foot to it. "Describing the Sky" has a reoccurring guitar part that makes for a perfect ringtone. One song, "Down Around Here," profiles the Alston, Mass. music scene.

There is one song, "Known to be Blue," (coming in at 1:01), that is essentially the album's only down-beat song. However, the best song on the record is the fantastic "1, 1, 1." Its ska undertones are prominent, but it still rings separate from ska. You just can't not tap your foot in time, or nod your head with the rhythm while listening to *Stroll*.

*Fluent In Stroll*, simply put, is "walking music." That's to say, it's not the best music to listen to while sitting in front of your computer.

Throw in on your iPod, put in your headphones and go for a walk in the gorge on a sunny day. Big D's latest album is feel-good music that makes you do just that: feel good. It's that simple.

 **Watch online:** Behind the scenes footage of the making of *Alice: Tales of a Curious Girl*, coming in Nov. [www.thebehrendbeacon.com](http://www.thebehrendbeacon.com)



This Latin and jazz combo's vibrant melody brought new and exciting liveliness to Bruno's.

Photos by Dan Smith / The Behrend Beacon

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