

# Experienced musical cast strengthens 'Little Shop'

preview by Daniel J. Stasiewski  
managing editor

There is still one week until the Studio Theatre premiere of "Little Shop of Horrors," but Dr. Christine Mangone sums up her experience thus far with four words. "It's an amazing cast."

Mangone, the production's director and a lecturer in theater, is currently working with 13 members of the campus community to bring to life the musical tale of a young man who uses an alien plant to get the attention of his dream girl.

"The show requires such hard work and the entire cast has risen to the occasion," said Mangone.

The hardworking cast features veterans of community theater companies, choir groups and high school drama clubs. Most notable are the show's star-crossed lovers, Seymour and Audrey, played by Behrend Drama Club president Steve O'Donnell, HSTBA 06, and Beth Bohun, COMBA 04, respectively.

O'Donnell said he has been doing musical theater since he was 14 years old, but the role of Seymour, the young man who finds the plant, is an important one in his acting history.

"This is by far the biggest role I've had in my whole life," said O'Donnell. The number of songs and the amount of stage time is the most he's ever taken on.

O'Donnell isn't unfamiliar with the Studio Theatre. The thespian has participated in the One Act Plays and Improv Nights as part of the Behrend Drama Club, and has acted in Romulus Linney's two-part play "Sand Mountain" for previous Studio Theatre director Tony Elliot.

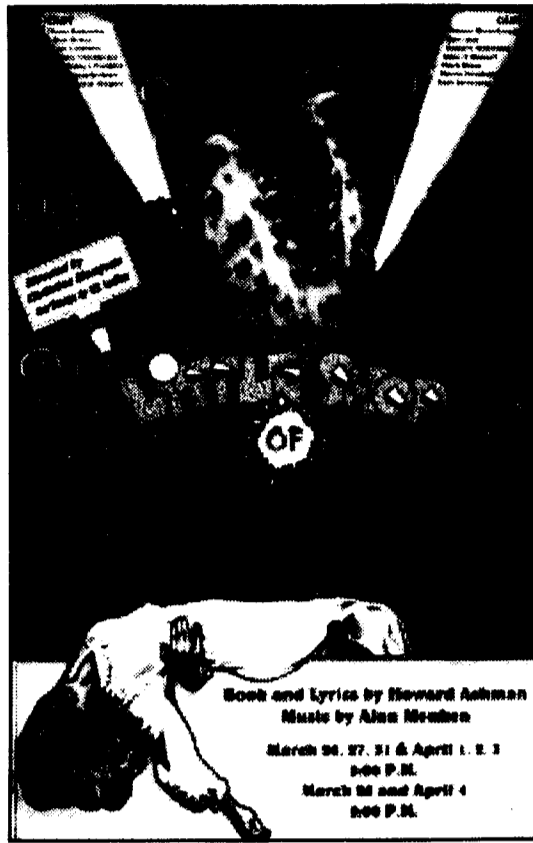
Bohun, who stars opposite O'Donnell as Seymour's love interest, Audrey, is an experienced performer as well. An Erie Playhouse player, Bohun says her voice is what makes her a star.

"Apparently I'm a pretty good singer from feedback I've received," said Bohun.

Apparently both O'Donnell and Bohun are both pretty good singers. Fellow cast mate and another seasoned performer, Jenna Gregory, DUS 02, said she was nearly brought to tears when she first heard O'Donnell and Bohun's version of the production's most popular song, "Suddenly Seymour." Gregory plays Patricia Martin, a role she describes as small.

But the other members of the cast don't write-off Gregory's role, or any other role for that matter. When it comes to doing a production as elaborate as "Little Shop of Horrors," the entire cast must work together to make the show a success.

Take "the trio," for example. Tamarra McDowell, ED 04; Deniys Franklin, BCBUS 04; and Tanaz Balaporia, DUS 02, play the roles of Ronette, Crystal and Chiffon, respectively. The three performers participate in practically every one of the show's musical numbers and have developed a strong friendship because of that. The trio believes no one would ever guess they weren't always as close as they are today.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Despite the trio's special bond, the entire cast has developed a relationship all its own.

"We're just play off of each other, giving each other compliments all the time," said Francis Hayes, CMDIS 04, who plays the shop owner Mr. Mushnick.

Mangone, who doesn't perform in the production, sees it from a different, but more enthusiastic perspective.

"We have so much work to do but I'm happy with the work the actors and musicians are doing," said Mangone. "They've really taken ownership of it."

Mangone also said the cast is so great that her role as music director and director wasn't as difficult as it could have been. During practices, some students played the piano in Mangone's place and Dr. John Champagne, Associate Professor of English, took on the role of vocal coach.

Champagne also plays the sadistic dentist, Orin Scrivello, D.D.S, a role that was performed by Steve Martin in the 1986 film version of the stage musical.

If "Little Shop of Horrors" is a success, Mangone hopes that she will be able to obtain funding for a musical director for future productions.

Right now, however, Mangone is concerned with telling the story like it was meant to be told, as a simple relationship between two people that goes wrong. That, according to Mangone, is "the soul" of the production.

"Little Shop of Horrors" will be performed March 26, 27 and 31 and April 1-3 at 8 p.m. in the Studio Theatre. Additional performances will be on March 28 and April 4 at 2 p.m. Student admission is \$5, with general admission priced at \$7. For tickets call 898-6242.

# Protestant Campus Ministries to debate 'Bowling for Columbine'

preview by Daniel J. Stasiewski  
managing editor

Michael Moore stirred up controversy last March, when he denounced the war in Iraq in his Academy Award acceptance speech. One day removed from the anniversary of his speech, students and Erie community members will have a chance to stir some controversy of their own.

Protestant Campus Ministry will screen Michael Moore's Oscar-winning documentary "Bowling for Columbine," Monday at 7 p.m. in Reed 117.

The event, which is co-sponsored by Catholic Campus Ministry, Lion Entertainment Board, Personal Counseling and Residence Life, will feature a panel discussion after the film is screened.

Lynn McNeil, Coordinator of Protestant Campus Ministry, organized the event after discussions of the film in her women's Bible study group prompted interesting reactions among the students.

"It really made the students think and they really had some questions," said McNeil.

The questions revolved around anything from the power of the media to issues of pressure on today's youth. The latter is what McNeil wants to focus on in Monday's debate, which is one reason psychology faculty have been invited to the discussion.

"Charisse Nixon has done a lot of studies on bullying and youth violence," said McNeil. "We thought she would be a really good person to help with the panel discussion in that regard."

Nixon, co-author of the book "Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying," will be on the panel along with two students who have yet to be named.

Dr. Derek Mace, lecturer in Psychology, will serve as the moderator.

The Rev. Mike Allision of Catholic Campus Ministry, Sue Daley from personal counseling, and Dr. Ken Miller, Director of Student Affairs, will also be involved in the panel discussion.

McNeil believes Miller will provide an especially interesting commentary about the film.

"He's a father," said McNeil. "He can offer that perspective, which is, what are the challenges he is going to face raising his kid?"

The pressure on youth, however, isn't the only topic that will be discussed. The documentary has been attacked for distorting facts and manipulating the truth, and Moore himself is a controversial voice on America's left. McNeil doesn't want to see those issues ignored.

"I would actually like to hear students' opinions about him," said McNeil, noting Moore's outspoken objection to many of the Bush administration's policies.

Moore, who received a mixed reception at the 2003 Oscar Ceremony for his anti-war speech, has recently written the book, "Dude, Where's My Country," criticizing George W. Bush. Moore is also preparing to release his next film, "Fahrenheit 9/11: The Temperature Where Freedom Burns," in September.

McNeil mentioned members of her Bible study group had expressed some concern over Moore's handling of the subject matter, including questions of manipulating victims of the Columbine High School massacre and an aging Charleton Heston. She also said she anticipated discussions of the accuracy of the film.

"Bashing our government has always been accepted as part of the American culture," said McNeil. "If you can't say 'I have real proof of this,' is it fair for him or anyone to make accusations?"

McNeil said she would like to focus on specific issues raised in the film "Bowling for Columbine," but knows it may be impossible to not discuss the controversy surrounding both the documentary and Moore.

The important thing, according to McNeil, is not just what students are discussing, it's that they are actively involved in discussing the issues they feel are relevant to our government and culture.



## BAY CITY TATTOO CO.

759 E. 12<sup>TH</sup> Street  
Erie, PA 16503  
(814) 456-7260  
EST. 1992

12-10 Mon-Thur 12-12 Fri-Sat  
4-10 Sun

Hospital Sterilization

Largest Tattoo Shop  
On The East Coast!

15% Off With Student ID!

Appointments Available



### THE LOGAN WINTERGARDEN SERIES 2003-2004

Music at Noon

## CHATHAM BAROQUE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, NOON

Bring your lunch to the Penn State Behrend Wintergarden and enjoy world-class performances in an informal setting.

ADMISSION IS FREE.



## Arts & Entertainment Highlights

### Top 40 Singles

1. "Yeah!" - Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris
  2. "Toxic" - Britney Spears
  3. "My Immortal" - Evanescence
  4. "This Love" - Maroon 5
  5. "One Call Away" - Chingy featuring J. Weav
  6. "With You" - Jessica Simpson
  7. "The Way You Move" - Outkast
  8. "Topsy" - J-Kwon
  9. "Someday" - Nickelback
  10. "F\*\*k It (I Don't Want You Back)" - Eamon
- \*\*According to Billboard.com\*\*

### Album Releases on Tuesday

- The Vines -- "Winning Days"
- Usher -- "Confessions"
- Eric Clapton -- "Me and Mr. Johnson"
- Guns N' Roses -- "Greatest Hits"

### New Movie Releases

- "Taking Lives" - Angelina Jolie
- "Dawn of the Dead" - Sarah Polley and Ving Rhames
- "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" - Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet and Tom Wilkinson

### DVD Releases on Tuesday

- "Gothika"
- "Dirty Pretty Things"
- "Shattered Glass"
- "The Magdalene Sisters"