

“Waiting” is coming

State Theatre hosts troupe's interpretation of 1950s tragi-comedy “Waiting for Godot”

By Paul Osolnick and Kathleen Loughran
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITERS

Unlike the characters of the play, audiences will not have to wait to see “Waiting for Godot” at the State Theatre.

The production will premiere 8 p.m. Friday night at the State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave., with a short preview performance at 8 tonight.

The play is presented by The Next Stage, a local theatre group which independently produces several plays at the State Theatre throughout the year.

Co-Artistic Director Jay D. Shuchter said the plot revolves around four main characters: two men who are waiting for Godot and two others who happen upon them.

The two men waiting for Godot become the main focus of the story, as they amuse themselves with games and conversations while they wait, Shuchter said.

Shuchter said he thinks some audiences consider the play to be a comedy, despite the play's more dramatic themes.

Director Elaine Meder-Wilgus shares a similar view.

“We laugh a lot,” Meder-Wilgus said. “‘Waiting for Godot’ is a comedy and it hits you in the side of your head.”

Meder-Wilgus said the simple act of waiting in the play is symbolic of the time spent throughout a person's entire life.

“The play is about how do we make sense of what we do between the time we're born and die,” Meder-Wilgus said. “It's about what you spend your time thinking about, is it the circumstances you can't change or the people that come into your life and do change it.”

Meder-Wilgus said Samuel Beckett, who wrote the play shortly after World War Two, intended for the production to be a comedy, but the production was a little ahead of its time.



Courtesy of flickr.com

Actors perform a scene from “Waiting for Godot.”

“I think when it first came out, everyone was just sort of struck by the audacity and awe of this concept of what does life mean,” Meder-Wilgus said. “But he still wrote it to be a comedy, but I don't think anyone was ready to laugh at it yet.”

Meder-Wilgus said the play will focus less on the existential themes of “Waiting for Godot” and focus more on Beckett's comedy.

“[Audiences] should expect to see some incredible performances, humor and comedy and a well-rounded, well-written play,” Meder-Wilgus said.

“It's classic and we tried to make it relevant for our times.”

Part of the reason The Next Stage chose to perform “Waiting for Godot” is because of the organization's fan base, Shuchter said, which the troupe wanted to “treat” with famous plays.

State Theatre Marketing Director Kristy Cyone said The Next Stage has produced several plays at the State Theatre over the years.

“This is a performance in a series for The Next Stage,” Cyone said. “They have a great following here. And we're happy to give them a place to call home.”

Tickets for tonight's preview performance are \$10 for all ages. Tickets for weekend performances are \$16 for general admission and \$14 for students and seniors.

Performances will run at 8 p.m. on Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday.

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If you go

What: “Waiting for Godot”

Where: State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave.

When: Preview at 8 p.m. tonight, performance at 8 p.m. Friday

Details: Preview tickets are \$10, performance tickets are \$16 general admission and \$14 for students and seniors.