

NRT presents a classic Shakespearan play

By Hannah Rishel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

In Shakespeare's time, men portrayed all the roles in his plays — but this weekend, No Refund Theatre will have actresses take on all the characters in "Twelfth Night."

NRT will perform at 8 p.m. Friday and 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday in 111 Forum. Admission is free.

Director Andrew Jen said he chose to direct "Twelfth Night" because it is his second favorite Shakespeare play — his first being "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which he directed in spring 2009.

"It's widely regarded as Shakespeare's best comedy," Jen, Class of 2010, said.

As a twist on the play, five actresses will take on the play's 15 characters, both male and female. To distinguish one character from another, each role is defined by a specific prop that the character wears or carries. Sometimes one actress has to play two characters in the same scene, so they have to put one prop down and pick up another to signify the change.

Katherine Leiden plays four characters in the play: Olivia, Sir Andrew, Valentine and the First Officer.

Leiden (senior-English) said four roles may seem to be a lot, but the amount of lines she has would be the same if she had a lead role in another play.

Of the four characters, she said Olivia is her favorite because she loves playing a typical Shakespearan lady, but enjoys playing the male roles, too.

"I'll have eight male roles after this show," Leiden said. "I love playing guys' roles. It's fun to try my hand at a wide range of characters."

Christine Buckley is playing male roles for the first time as Orsino, Toby and the captain.

"I'm noticing my feminine side a lot more than usual," Buckley (junior-international politics and theatre) said.

She said comparing how she normally acts and how she acts in character helped her come to that realization.

Another challenge Buckley faces is switching between her three roles, sometimes in the middle of a scene.

Rachel Sweeney is also playing male roles for the first time as Malvolio — who is "really old and uptight" — and Antonio — who is "gay and uptight."

"Going off stage and coming on stage as a different character is fun, interesting and nerve-wracking at the same time," Sweeney (junior-theatre and English) said.

Sara Costantino — who plays Viola, Maria and Sebastian — said sharing the stage with actresses playing male roles isn't that hard.

"It's just like when you're performing against them playing a girl," Costantino (junior-public relations and theatre) said. "You're looking at them as their character."

She said acting in Shakespeare plays in high school has helped her a lot with this show.

"There's a lot of elevated language that you don't get in modern plays," Costantino said.

"There's also a lot of innuendoes."

Sweeney also encouraged students to come out and see the performance.

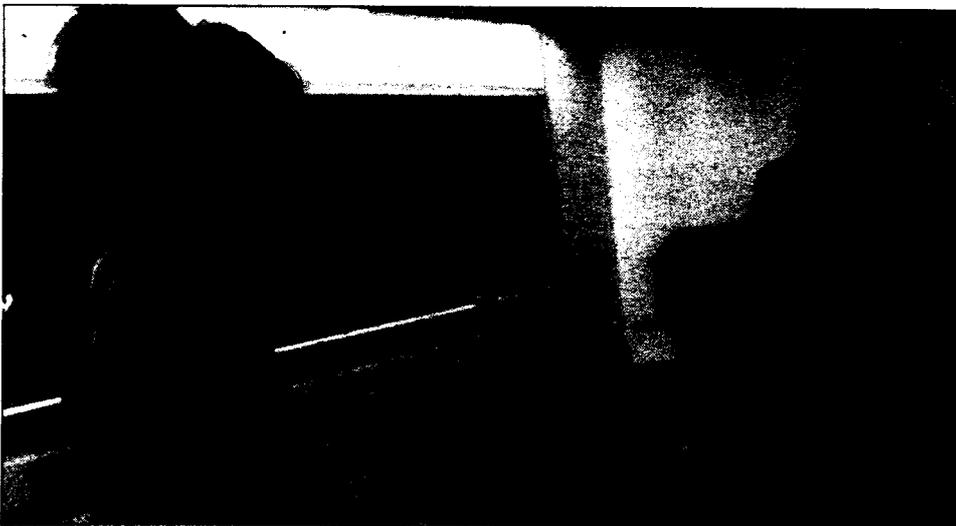
"Come see the show if you want to see five sexy ladies fall in love with each other and creep on each other," she said. "It'll be a good time."

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Dana Heller/Collegian

Members of No Refund Theatre practice their latest production "Twelfth Night."



Dana Heller/Collegian

NRT returns to theatrical roots with its production of a classic Shakespearan play.

An Evening with

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