

# NRT holds spring auditions

By Hannah Rishel  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Almost every week of the semester, No Refund Theater turns 111 Forum from a classroom into a stage. But in order to do this they need to select actors.

This week the theatre club held auditions for the shows of the first half of the spring semester. On Monday through Wednesday, actors participated in auditions, with callbacks held on Thursday.

Kristen Glaser had never tried out for an NRT show before, but heard about auditions in an e-mail.

"I did musicals and plays in high school," Glaser (junior-information sciences and technology and visual arts) said. "Also, every NRT show I've seen I've loved."

For auditions the actors could either read a monologue from one of the shows they were trying out for or they could select one of their own choice. If they wanted to try out for the musical "Songs For a New World," they also needed to sing 16 bars of music.

Jason Cassidy, who is directing

"Othello" this semester, said that one of the challenging things about auditions from a director's perspective is looking into the future.

"A lot of people can do a role well but not audition well," Cassidy (graduate-higher education administration) said. "I always approach it as fitting puzzle pieces together."

He added that he gives actors callbacks because he knows he wants them in his show somewhere, but he needs to see how they work with other actors.

Glaser said that she looked online for monologues, settling on Maria's final monologue from "West Side Story." She also decided to sing the Barbra Streisand classic "Don't Rain on My Parade" for her music selection.

"Right as I'm walking in the door I feel the nerves, but when I get in and start acting it all goes away," Glaser said.

Bram McGinnis had a different approach: He didn't come in with a prepared monologue because he already knew he wanted to do one from a specific show.

He said that going about auditions in

this manner used to make him nervous but over time he's adapted to doing it.

"A lot of auditions I've had for NRT have been cold reads," McGinnis (senior-management), who most recently played Ronnie in "The House of Blue Leaves," said. He added that he's somewhat nervous when he starts auditions, but the feeling goes away as he gets into the role.

After her audition, Glaser was at ease because of the positive feedback she got from the directors. Her hard work paid off when she got a callback for one of the shows.

NRT veteran Elaina Mercurio got two callbacks on Thursday night, which she said was exciting because "any callback is a good callback." In order to prepare, she spent the day reading over the parts she had been called back for.

"I'm always more nervous for callbacks," Mercurio (senior-human development and family studies) said. "I know who my competition is."

The actors received an e-mail with the final cast list late Thursday night.



Kelley Rootes Murdy/Collegian

A student practices lines for a callback during NRT auditions Tuesday night.

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Kelley King/Collegian

Erin Blöse (freshman-secondary education) swing dances with Eric Margusity (freshman-graphic design) at Sugar On Top Thursday night.

## Dancers 'sizzle,' swing at Sugar on Top event

By Joshua Glossner  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The Sizzle Sticks and the Penn State Swing Dance Club took over Sugar On Top, 121 1/2 E. Beaver Ave., Thursday night with moves that swept attendees off their feet.

Jennie Lavine, clarinetist of the local swing band the Sizzle Sticks, planned the swing-dancing event.

"I walked in [Sugar On Top] one day, and I saw how the floor was a perfect set-up for something like this," Lavine (graduate-biology) said, adding she likes to support local businesses in any way she can.

Last night's event was the debut performance for the Sizzle Sticks, Lavine said. The band formed a few months ago.

"The members of our band are already great by themselves, but in the past few months, we have been able to work well together," she said.

The band, which features guitarist Stacy Glen Tibbetts, bassist Andre La Velle and violinist Jeff Yelton, covers swing music from the 1920s to the 1940s, Lavine said.

They also played an original song from Tibbetts' upcoming album "Out on the Town," set to be released on Dec. 8.

Tibbetts said the song from the album that the band played, "Little Black Thing," is about a woman getting dressed up to go out for a night of fun.

"It's such an honor and privilege to play my own music," Tibbetts said.

"And having other people play my music is an even bigger honor."

Andrew Selzer, a co-president of the Swing Dance Club, said swing dancing is a very sociable experience and a great alternative to a typical college party.

"Plus, cupcakes don't give you hangovers," Selzer said, referring to Sugar On Top's cupcakes.

Club member Stephanie Helmick (junior-art education) said one of the first things she learned in swing dancing was how to read her partner's body and movements.

"The girl normally [follows], so it's almost like we are a shopping cart," she said.

"We just have to follow wherever the guy leads us and feel the emotion he feels."

Elaine Meder-Wilgus, owner of Webster's Café, said she was happy with the turnout for the event.

"I can't keep still when I see the students dancing," Meder-Wilgus said. "They make it look so easy."

Gina Domenick, baker for Sugar On Top and Sweet-Gees, said she didn't know so many students were interested in swing music and enjoyed dancing to it.

Swing Dance Club member David Smith (junior-physical education) said he came from a football practice to the swing dance event.

"It's a cheap workout, and it's a lot of fun," Smith said. "It's great because [the Swing Dance Club] accepts any level of dancers."

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## Students address LGBT issues with skits, poems

By Hannah Rishel  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

One theatre class isn't afraid to talk about the elephant in the room.

The School of Theatre's Diverse Cultures Workshop class performed "Out and About Out" Thursday afternoon in 114 Theatre Building.

The performance, directed by theatre professor Charles Dumas, comprised of 10 short skits and 10 poems, dealt with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues — from being in the closet to stereotypes — published in a book by the same name.

Denny Chheang attended the performance because four of his poems, which were published in "Out and About Out," were read aloud, which he said was "very flattering."

"I had no idea they were going to read them until a few days ago," Chheang (sophomore-math and Italian) said. "I was very impressed with the actors. For the most part they got across the points I was trying to convey."

He added that he liked all the performances, but his favorite was the last one, entitled "Surrender," about the aftermath of Rutgers University freshman Tyler Clementi's recent suicide.

"It was very touching," Chheang said. "One of my poems they read was about suicide, so I guess they planned reading it right before that skit."

Kelly Arbogast, one of the actresses in "Out and About Out," said that the process

of putting the performance together was challenging.

"Because I'm not gay I was afraid I would offend people," Arbogast (junior-philosophy) said. "It's kind of like how men don't feel like they can have a voice for feminism; straight people can't really comment on gay issues."

She added that "Who's Biff?" — one of the skits she was in, which dealt with stereotypes of LGBT people — was borderline taboo, so she and the other actors were worried people would be offended.

Arbogast said her favorite poem of the event was "Transgender," written and performed by Iris Guo.

"I have no idea what it's like to be transgender," she said.

"It was probably so hard to put herself into that role."

Dr. Susan Russell, a Penn State theatre professor, attended one of the Diverse Cultures Workshop classes to help the actors and actresses.

"It's extraordinary to watch young people who desire to make real change," she said. Russell added the actors had deeply endowed voices that professional actors long to have.

"There was a vibration in the room," she said. "None of us wanted to get up and leave."

Russell added that she couldn't pick a favorite part of the performance.

"From 3 o'clock to 4:15 was my favorite," she said, checking her watch with a laugh.

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## Art exhibit to examine fakes

By David Runk  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT — When a painting attributed to Vincent Van Gogh was bequeathed to the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1990, it was met with immediate suspicion from scholars and art experts.

"Still life with Carnations," an unsigned painting of flowers, was to be sold to help fund an endowment to buy modern art, said museum director Graham Beal.

Instead, auction houses refused to sell it. Van Gogh specialists questioned its authenticity.

And the painting remained at the museum, where despite extensive study the question of whether it was by the famed artist or an imitator remains unanswered.

"It's gone into this rather unfortunate area of not being trusted," Beal said Thursday. "But as tests have shown, there's nothing in it that says this cannot be a Van Gogh. All of the paints, all of the technique, everything is commensurate with the way Van Gogh was working at that time."

The painting is being displayed alongside a genuine Van Gogh as part of "Fakes, Forgeries, and Mysteries," an exhibit at the museum opening Sunday about the science and research behind figuring out whether art works are authentic.

The show, which runs through April 10, includes about 60 artworks.

Its aim is to highlight mistakes and

other discoveries made over the years about pieces of the museum's extensive collection.

One gallery displays works once thought to be authentic but later found to be copies or stylistic replicas.

Another room shows forgeries made to deceive.

A mock lab offers the chance to learn about investigative techniques such as pigment analysis, and a final gallery focuses on lingering puzzles about certain works.

"Nothing is written in stone," said Salvador Salort-Pons, associate curator of European paintings and curator of the exhibit.

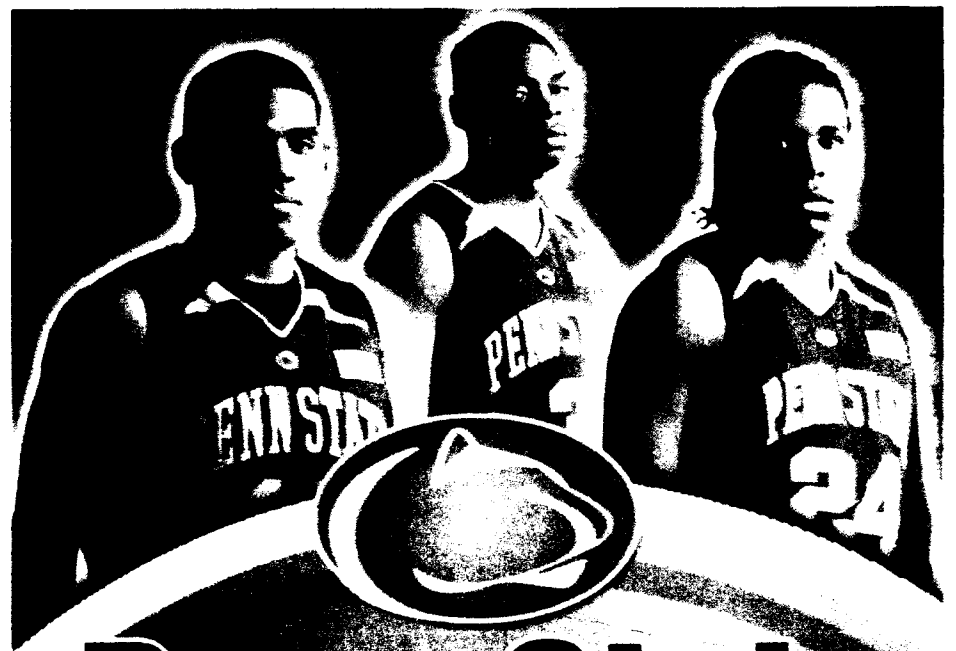
In the gallery on forgeries, a painting titled "A Female Saint" that once was attributed to Italian artist Sandro Botticelli is exhibited alongside "The Resurrected Christ," a Botticelli painting from around 1480.

The display invites visitors to compare the works, looking to details such as brushstrokes that were clues to museum curators.

"Still life with Carnations," which is hung in the gallery on mysteries, came to the museum from the collection of dime-store heiress Catherine Kresge Dewey.

It had been accepted as a Van Gogh in the 1920s.

But doubt cast in the 1990s by Van Gogh experts left the museum unable to say with confidence that it was by the artist, Beal said.



**Penn State vs. Fairfield**  
Friday 7:30 pm

**FOOD DRIVE NIGHT**

Adults who bring a canned good can receive admission for just \$7

Youth who bring a canned good can receive FREE Admission

Season Ticket Holders bringing a canned good to Portal 15 on the concourse are entered to win an autographed basketball from the Nittany Lions