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USC Theatre gives beautiful show

gamecock critic **ROB LINDSEY**

According to the "Translators Note" in the program, the Oresteia is the only complete trilogy of Greek plays to survive the ages. However, Peter Meineck translates and condenses Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers and The Furies into one play, presented now through Feb 22 at Drayton Hall by Theatre USC. Though the plays are shortened for the modern audience (in their entirety, a production of the three would last over six hours), the spectacle and the message remain intact.

For those unfamiliar with traditional Greek plays, each performer wears a mask that covers the entire face. When characters speak to one another, they address the audience and not each other. This, along with the eerie ambient music of atonal trills and

wailing singers, sets a severely somber mood. Even as Agamemnon (impressively played by Mike R. Colter), returning triumphant from the Greek conquest of Troy, enters the action, the mood, which should turn joyous, remains foreboding. Fulfilling this ominous expectation, he is quickly killed by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover, Aegisthus.

Agamemnon's son, Orestes, returns to Argos several years after his father's death, and, goaded by a decree of Apollo, kills the murderers. The final of the three plays concerns Orestes' judgment at the hands of Athena and the elders of Argos.

The theme of the play is justice and hinges upon the distinction between which is the graver crime: killing one's husband or one's mother. Instead of the hands of the gods descending from

the heavens to mete out justice to the guilty, Athena gives the citizens of Argos the chance to vote on Orestes' fate. Though the outcome ultimately depends upon Athena's judgment and might be unsavory to certain people, the fact that the citizens are given the right to decide is a tribute to the laws of the Athenian state of ancient Greece. Acts of singular revenge do not go unnoticed. Also, groups of zealots (i.e. the Furies) are not allowed to make sweeping condemnations. These ideas are the roots of modern democracy—empowering the people to decide their own fates, calmly and with reason.

As grand as all of these ideas seem, they must be taken with a grain of salt, however. The society of ancient Athens was built around elder white males, giving neither women nor slaves the

rights accorded citizens. This inequality brings about the unsavory ending. As for the performance itself, the chorus is fabulous, writhing and speaking both singularly and in unison. Also, the spectacles of the Furies and of Orestes' detainment (crucifixion?) are quite impressive. The staging is very well done with complex choral movements and innovative representations of death. The set is simple, yet powerful (blood flows from the walls, and the land of Argos is symbolized by a circle of sand). The entire production has the feeling of traditional Greek drama.

Theatre USC has produced an excellent play. Though one might not leave the performance smiling, the Oresteia definitely gives one ideas to ponder and beauty to behold.

THE WEDDING SINGER

PG-13. Robby (Adam Sandler), a wedding singer, is an '80s-nice guy engaged to be married, but he seems far from going to the altar. Naturally, he does meet a more attractive candidate for marriage (Drew Barrymore), but she's about to marry a lout.

gamecock critics **SUSAN MEYERS TRENHOLM NINESTEIN** ★★★★★

From now on, every time I go to a wedding reception, I definitely will be giving the wedding singer a second glance. Besides the fact that my jaw hurt for three days from laughing so hard, my eyes were a little swollen, as well.

The Wedding Singer was a hilarious comedy that took you on a time warp back to the 1980s when pony tails on the side and purple mascara were cool.

Love in the '80s is no different from the '90s, except the music was better back then. Adam Sandler is very convincing as Robby, an ex-rocker turned wedding singer, who after being stood up at his own wedding, begins to despise the idea of long-term relationships through comedy and sarcasm the only way Sandler can deliver. The movie, as a whole, is very entertaining and gives its viewers a reassurance that love doesn't bite or bleed. Hopefully, the same will happen to me once I begin my lounge singing career.

gamecock critic **ERIN SHAW** ★★★

I went into The Wedding Singer hoping to get some good laughs from the chronically funny Sandler and for a few walks down memory road of the '80s. I walked out pleasantly surprised at the surprisingly catching plot and instant "feel good" quality of the film. The movie is made by setting the not-so-original romance against an unlikely background: the wedding halls

of 1980s Long Island. Adam Sandler is funny as usual, but he actually pulled off some reasonably good and convincing acting in this tale of love lost and found. Drew Barrymore provides the perfect character for the wedding singer to fall for.

The soundtrack, wardrobe and expressions bring moviegoers all the way back to the 1980s. The Wedding Singer gives audiences just enough of big hair, one-hit wonders and acid washed jeans to last a lifetime. Sandler's character's backup singer, George, a kitschy Culture Club imitator, best represents the cap we must all put on this decade of excess. By the fourth time he sings "Do You Really Want To Hurt Me?" you'll have laughed enough for the price of your admission and feel utter happiness that the '80s have passed.

gamecock critic **CONNIE KARICKHOFF** ★★1/2

In 1985, I was in the fifth grade, addicted to MTV for three solid years, dressed like Madonna and thought the members of Menudo were the collective epitome of hot male. The Wedding Singer is definitely the movie for my generation. Adam Sandler and other Saturday Night Live veterans do it again with this quirky, cute movie about a good-hearted, small-town wedding singer who's looking for a wife and family, and a good-hearted, small-town wedding waitress who turns out to be the answer to all his dreams. Though not as funny as Billy Madison and Happy Gilmore, Robby Hart is a true nice guy, and Sandler gives him a goofy warmth not as well developed in his previous movies. Drew Barrymore becomes a believable sweet girl looking for true love. The clothing in this movie alone makes it a must-see for all of us who grew up in the '80s, not to mention the fabulous soundtrack. And, yes, folks, that is a cameo by Billy Idol, but the light, comical plot is enough to carry this movie to the three and a half stars I've given it.

Nonnah's offers high taste, price

gamecock critic **JENNIFER STANLEY**

Nonnah's, in the Congaree Vista, is high on taste, high on atmosphere and high on price.

Whether you need a break from studying, you want to catch up with a friend, or you want to go somewhere after an evening at the Koger Center—most nights it's open until midnight, Nonnah's is a great pick.

Nonnah's class sets the tone for a quiet, late night of coffee and desserts. Diners can sit outside in the summer, provided there is an empty table, or inside amidst the low lighting, mirrored walls and elegant atmosphere.

Nonnah's forte is desserts. The pastry chefs offer rich, homemade white and dark cake, turtle cheesecake, light cheesecake covered with a heavy mixture of carmel, chocolate and nuts, raspberry torte and espresso torte.

Be ready for a delicious sugar overload. A sampler platter is a good deal for a group of no more than four. It includes a small piece of six different desserts. And with the huge variety Nonnah's has to offer, it's hard to decide on just one.

For a snack lower on sugar, try the parmesan cheese dip. It's enough for two to snack on but not enough to be a meal. The mango salsa and chips, I hear, is a mango and onions chopped into a salsa. The salsa, while enough for a snack, is rich in onion taste. The Thai chicken, on the other hand, is barely enough for a one-person snack.

To compliment the desserts, Nonnah's has capuccino and other coffee specialties, and liqueurs can be added to each. The addition of a liqueur such as Kaluha or Bailey's Irish Cream adds a uniquely sweet flavor and can be dessert all by itself.

Although the presentation of each pastry is classy and eye-catching, and the fancy presentation doesn't stop with the pastries, the coffee drinks come with a rock candy stirrer.

One the down side, the service takes too long and isn't conducive to a quick study break. Also, prepare to lighten your pockets because you'll be forking out more than you would be at the Krispy Kreme. The desserts cost around \$5 or more, and the coffee specialties cost \$4 to \$5. Expect to pay \$15 or more for coffee and desserts for two. Also, the coffee liqueurs cost about \$4.

Although the desserts are tempting and tasty, diners should visit Nonnah's for the atmosphere. And if your wallet is empty, get a donut and hot chocolate at the Krispy Kreme.



EVENTS

- ▶ "Annie," 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays through Feb. 21, Abbeville Opera House. \$13. (864) 459-2157.
- ▶ "The Joy of Going Somewhere Definite," through Feb. 21, Trustus Theatre. Students, \$10. 254-9732.
- ▶ "The Star-Spangled Girl," through Feb. 21, Chapin Community Theatre (downtown Chapin). Advance reservations are recommended. 345-6181.
- ▶ "For God's Eyes: Plates and Vases," through Feb. 22, McKissick Museum. Exhibit of works resulting from the collaboration of North Carolina ceramic artist Tom Spleth and Israeli painter Moshe Gershuni. 777-7251.
- ▶ Riverdance, through Feb. 22, Atlanta Civic Center. (404) 817-8700.
- ▶ Freakwater, Sue Garner and P. W. Long, 10 p.m., Feb. 18, Hunter-Gatherer. \$6 cover.

CONCERTS

- ▶ Third Eye Blind and Smash Mouth, w/ Space Monkeys, 7 p.m., Feb. 18, Characters of Greenville. \$20.
- ▶ Unsane, 7 p.m., Feb. 18, Ground Zero (Spartanburg). (864) 948-1661.
- ▶ Edwin McCain w/ Angie Aparo, Feb. 19, Elbow Room Music Hall
- ▶ Etheridge & Kimpland, Feb. 19, Sharky's
- ▶ Monty Craig Trio, Feb. 19, Nonnah's
- ▶ Phyllis Davis, Feb. 19, One Two Three
- ▶ The Pietasters, Waggles, Ensign, 8 p.m., Feb. 19, Library
- ▶ Scott Carpenter and 25 ft. Stanley, Feb. 19, New Brookland
- ▶ Tinbenders, Feb. 19, Characters
- ▶ Todd Cowart, Feb. 19, Beulah's Bar & Grill
- ▶ Anybody's Guess, Feb. 20, Skyline Club
- ▶ Melanie McMillan, Feb. 20, Alley Cafe

CORRECTION

Jeff Miller was identified incorrectly in an article in the Feb. 6 edition of The Gamecock.

Miller should have been identified as the Associate Director of the film Freakshow.

SITE OF THE DAY

Check out this week's current event with a twist.

<http://www.theonion.com>

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