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McCartney steals show during Super Bowl halftime with pyrotechnics, not controversy

By DAVID BAUDER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nobody, but nobody was worried when Paul McCartney stripped off his jacket midway through his halftime performance at the Super Bowl.

All he revealed was a long-sleeved red shirt. Nothing malfunctioned. And if he wore any nipple jewelry, he mercifully kept it to himself.

NFL officials wanted a safe halftime show after last year's Janet Jackson fiasco, and McCartney delivered. It was sweet nostalgia for the people stunned by Jackson's MTV-produced spectacle, if a bit off-putting for the kids: Each of his four songs was more than 30 years old.

Surely you recall last year's climax to a body-shaking, crotch-grabbing festival: Justin Timberlake yanking part of Jackson's top off to reveal her bare breast to some 90 million viewers.

McCartney's stage set — a giant cross of video boards on the stadium floor with the singer at the center — was visually arresting, although it made his opening song, "Drive My Car," look like one of the broadcast's dozens of auto commercials.

McCartney's theatrical James Bond theme "Live and Let Die" was a perfect backdrop for a stadium fireworks show. The lights, placards and video images also made "Hey Jude" a sight to see, although it was odd to see the red, white and blue placards co-opt one of the original British musical invaders for an all-American event.

There wasn't any danger of a lip-synch controversy, either. You could tell it was the lived-in voice of a 62-year-old singing.

It was strange seeing the former Beatle, a bold and shocking performer for another generation, now presented as the sedate option. NFL censors were probably hoping the "California grass" reference in "Get Back" slipped by unnoticed, or figured people would think he was simply referring to a football field.

Another irony: The overwhelmingly safe and patriotic musical presentations before and during the game appearing on the usually envelope-pushing Fox network, while last season's shocker came on fogey-friendly CBS.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paul McCartney, behind the keys, acknowledges the crowd during the halftime show at Super Bowl XXXIX.

The closest thing to a wardrobe malfunction during all the performances came courtesy of country singer Gretchen Wilson's guitar player during a pregame performance. His jeans had a strategically placed rip in the crotch.

Also before the game, Alicia Keys oozed both class and chops as she took a creepy concept — a duet with the late singer Ray Charles on one of his signatures, "America the Beautiful" — and made it work wonderfully. A picture of Charles singing appeared on the stadium scoreboard screens.

The pregame show was a mixture of old and new schools, with country, rap and soul. Wilson brought out white-bearded fiddle player Charlie Daniels, and the Black Eyed Peas had Earth, Wind & Fire along to sing "Shining Star."

Although with the NFL watching so closely, it's a wonder how Wilson's "Here For the Party" managed to slip through.

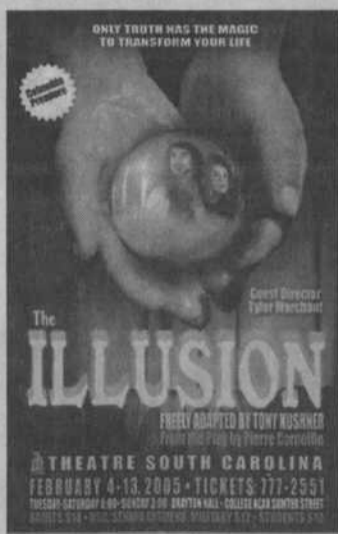
"Gonna have a little fun," she sang. "Gonna get me some."

One can almost hear the small voices in living rooms across the country: "Daddy, what does 'get me some' mean?"

"Some chips, honey. Now pass the salsa and quiet down."

PLAY REVIEW

Production almost kills 'Illusion'



"The Illusion"
★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆☆

By BOBBY BROOKS
THE GAMECOCK

USC's theatre department is taking a dramatic leap this season with the Columbia premiere of Tony Kushner's "The Illusion." Kushner is most famous for writing the Tony Award-winning play "Angels in America." USC alumnus Tyler Marchant is directing. Kushner's plays generally blend witty humor with severe dramatic moments.

Based on "L'illusion Comique," a 1636 play by Corneille, "The Illusion" explores the idea of love and theater.

"The Illusion" is a play about love," Marchant said. "It is also a play about the theater, a place where artist and audience work together to create reality out of make-believe."

An old man named Pridamant of Avignon ventures into a remote cave to visit the great magician Alcandre. The magician shows him a world in which the old man's son dwells in three successive visions. In each of these visions, Pridamant's son and the rest of the characters have changed names. The confusion this causes Pridamant is hilarious.

"The Illusion" constantly throws great laughs at the audience. There is love and betrayal, murder and sword fights. Surely there is something that could please everyone. The entire cast does an excellent job of bringing this period piece off its feet. Actor Steve Fenley always brings his characters to life — he played the title character in "Tartuffe" last season — and "The Illusion" is no exception. He glides gracefully around the stage as Alcandre, the magician on a pair of stilts in a gorgeous robe. Fenley even sports incredible face make-up that truly propels him into the role. The rest of the cast is also enjoyable to watch.

The production design is not the best

Theatre South Carolina has done. Kelly Fitzpatrick's costumes are very elegant and change subtly throughout the evening with the different scenes. The set and lighting designs were not very impressive. The sets consisted of only a few pieces against a cyclorama. The lighting design by director Tyler Marchant was striking with its impact and also staging, as gobos are used to bathe the entire ending scene in colored light.

While the play itself is brilliant, the production is not. The play constantly makes the audience question what is real. A slightly more realistic set might aid the production. Maybe that's what this production is pointing out. Peoples' imagination should be allowed to reveal itself more in their lives. Before you go see this production, be sure to put on your magician's cap and open your mind's eye.

"The Illusion" is playing today through Feb. 13 at Drayton Hall. Student tickets are \$10. Tickets for the public are \$14. Senior citizen, military, and USC faculty and staff tickets are \$12. Performances are Tuesday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the Theatre South Carolina box office, located in Longstreet Theatre.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gam.sc.edu

V-Day week starts today

Self-defense class teaches women how to protect themselves

By JENNIFER FREEMAN
THE MIX EDITOR

"Until the violence stops." This phrase is the slogan for the national V-Day campaign, which a group of USC students is joining in by performing Eve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues."

The week's activities culminate in the performances, but events are taking place to raise money and promote awareness of domestic violence and how to avoid it. All the money raised will go to the Women's Shelter in Columbia.

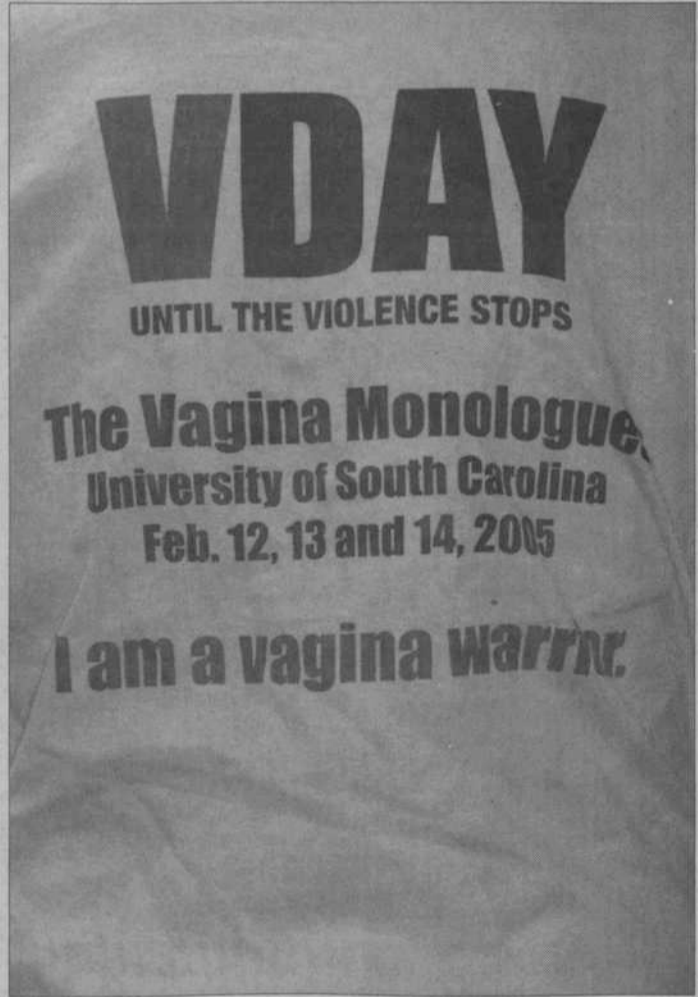
According to the national V-Day Web site, "V-Day is a global movement to stop violence against women and girls. V-Day is a catalyst that promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations.

V-Day generates broader attention for the fight to stop violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation and sexual slavery."

A self-defense class will be held 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday in the Bates social room and will be free to all female USC students. Germon Miller, or "Mama G" as her students call her, will run the AKERU Women's Urban Empowerment Program.

Miller has worked as an Urban Crisis Intervention Educator, a certified cultural historian, a combative scientist and a math teacher for the last 30 years.

A survivor of domestic abuse, Mama G and her infant son were protected by the members of the Philadelphia Black Renaissance Movement. Known then as Mwalimu Jamala Maisha, she became the only female to complete the four-day Warrior Test of the Vita Saana, the original Afrikan Fighting Arts society in the United States. Miller excelled in the fighting arts, specializing in the Afrikan systems. She holds the title of "Askari," meaning warrior enforcer, and she is ranked third out of the 35 black-belt members.



JESSICA NIELSEN/THE GAMECOCK

A V-Day supporter sports the campaign's T-shirt. The front reads, "My shirt says vagina on it." Students can purchase the T-shirt for \$10 on Greene Street in front of the Russell House Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cookies and chocolate will also be sold.

While Miller has competed internationally, including earning two gold medals at the World Games in Austria in 1988 and 1992, her focus is educating others about the Afrikan martial arts. In 1990, she developed the AKERU program for at-risk youth and has served as an anti-violence coordinator for many agencies.

"The mission of the AKERU cultural and discipline system is to present traditional teaching methods through cultural education to empower students to enhance their own value systems and to teach them to protect themselves with the best self-defense weapon they could ever have — their mind," Miller said. Mama G teaches many of these workshops, using her life experiences to demonstrate the techniques that can

be tailored to fit the individual needs of women.

The free workshop is sponsored by WSA, the Women's Student Association.

A "Vagina Carnival" will be held 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday on Greene Street in front of the Russell House. This carnival has a dual purpose of fund raising and educating. Chocolate treats and cookies will be sold, along with V-Day T-shirts. The tagless white T-shirts have a black-and-red design and are \$10.

The carnival will also feature free face-painting, games, and art and crafts, including finger-painting. The Women's Shelter and SHARE peers will have information tables.

A vagina-friendly trivia night will

◆ Please see V-DAY, page 8



TOP 5 SUPERBOWL COMMERCIALS

- 1 Bud Light: Parachuting
- 2 Diet Pepsi: P. Diddy Truck Trend
- 3 FedEx: Dancing Burt
- 4 Lays: MC Hammer comeback
- 5 Michelob: Rich and Smooth