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ARTS



Photo by Jeff Paslay

Elmatha's Apology opens tomorrow night at Arena Theatre, 1109 Old Campus Lane. The performance starts at 8 p.m.

Play explores morality, strength

S•H•O•W•T•I•M•E

Showtime: *Elmatha's Apology* opens today at the Arena Theatre, 1109 Old Campus Lane. Showtime is 8 p.m. Additional performances are scheduled for April 11-13 and 18-20. Tickets, available at the Robinson Theater, are \$3 for students and \$4 for the general public. The box office is open from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 6:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. on performance nights.



This is a play that celebrates the bittersweet complexities of the human emotion. As director Marion Rossi summed it up: *Elmatha's Apology* explores issues of honesty, morality, love, self-awareness and personal strength.

The play carries a message that goes beyond just the story of a young woman's quest for love and happiness.

"*Elmatha's* struggle to find true love in a less than true world asks that we consider the reasons and results of our actions in relationships while recognizing where true beauty lies — in ourselves," said Rossi, a master's student in theater arts.

In the play, *Elmatha* recounts memories of her past lives, especially her relationships with men,

and reflects on how fulfillment has somehow eluded her. But as she reviews these events in her life, *Elmatha* reconstructs her own sense of self-esteem through the haze of her emotional burden.

The end of the play however, is crafted ambiguously. The audience is left to decide if *Elmatha* is resolved in her willingness to try again at love, or if, as the title suggests, she is offering an apology for taking her life and putting an end to her agony.

Written in 1973, playwright Rebecca Ranson entered *Apology* in the American College Theater Festival. Since then, Ranson, a North Carolina native, has written more than 30 plays, many about rural women and grass-roots politics.

"Ranson touches on issues which I think we all need to think about and look at in our lives," Rossi said. "I find *Elmatha's Apology* intriguingly different, lyrical and poetic."

What Rossi finds appealing as well is Ranson's stylistic effort to mesh music and movement interludes into her works to enhance their dramatic structure.

By Ming Rodrigues
Emerald Entertainment Reporter

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