

Improv: Self-run student improv troupe finds rehearsals enjoyable

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which is played by two people, the actors can only speak when they are touching each other.

The situations created when actors attempt to act within these guidelines are often humorous.

"I laugh so hard in rehearsals I'll live 20 years longer than I normally would have," sophomore Rene Regan said.

To rehearse, members of Absolute Improv get together and play improv games for about two hours. Because every scene they perform is spontaneous and is dictated by suggestions from the audience, the members rehearse not to learn lines but to hone their ability to think on their feet and to work together to create entertaining scenes.

"These rehearsals are the only types of rehearsals I look forward to," junior M. Chandler Melvin said.

"Show rehearsals become laborious, and I start to hate it. But I've been doing this for four months and I'm never, ever sick of it."

Govier, a freshman, said he enjoys improv because it allows him to release frustration and to be wacky.



WENDY FULLER/Emerald

Scott Vogel shows off his vacation 'slides,' which are portrayed by Cameo Morningstar and M. Chandler Melvin, in the game 'Slide Show.'

"It's hanging out with a bunch of dorks and being a dork," he said. "We're just a bunch of goobers."

"It's the acupuncture of actors," said Honey, a sophomore.

The members of the troupe take turns playing different games while the others watch. At the end of each scene, the actors discuss together what

worked about it and how it could have been improved.

"We don't have a director or specific rules," said Vogel, a sophomore. "We're all an equal part of the troupe."

Because Absolute Improv is entirely student-run, the members have faced several challenges. One is that the troupe has no fixed rehearsal space.

"We always just go where

some place is open," Honey said. "We've rehearsed in every room in Villard."

Another difficulty is setting a fixed rehearsal time when all of the members can attend.

"The 14 people in this troupe are probably the 14 busiest people in the world," he said.

The troupe was born four months ago when Honey, sophomore John Sanders and juniors Megan Smith and Matt Berliner decided it would be fun to perform improv. Through an audition they expanded their membership to 14, and they gave their first performance at the Pocket Playhouse.

"The audience response was great," junior Cameo Morningstar said. "We had a huge, full house, and we thought, 'Oh my gosh, they really are having fun.'"

Since then the troupe has performed about two shows each month.

"It's rewarding to have people you trust get up there," sophomore Holly Thomas said. "I love seeing my peers succeed, and it's the greatest feeling to know you have that ability."

Honey said Absolute Improv got its name from an Absolut Vodka ad.

IMPROV AUDITIONS

Because several members of the troupe will be leaving for Europe, Absolute Improv will audition new members. The troupe is looking to take in four or more people.

WHEN: Feb. 24-25

WHERE: Villard Hall, room to be announced

HOW: Students who wish to audition will be asked to play several improvisational games. The troupe will look for high energy and the ability to interact well with others.

REQUIREMENTS: Anyone can try out for Absolute Improv. Prior experience is not required.

"We were doing posters for auditions and we were trying to think of a clever name," he said. "We were looking around my room and trying out things like 'Pulp Improv.' Then we looked in a magazine and saw an Absolut Vodka ad. I think it's a fitting name."

"It fits because nothing we do is planned," Melvin said.

"Except for the rehearsed stuff," Govier added.

weekend EVENT calendar

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