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Play revolves around intimacy

Theater review

Aaron Shakra
Pulse Reporter

I had the worst stomachache of my life before, during and after the opening night performance of University Theatre's "The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek." And I became determined not to let my bodily condition affect a potential review.

In a way, it was a serendipitous occurrence, because a stomachache works as a perfect metaphor for Naomi Wallace's play. The content lingers, refusing to fade — and this is meant in the best way.

The play takes place during Depression-era 1936 in a small, unidentified town. It centers around Pace Creagan (Tara Rae Warner) and Dalton Chance (Connor Dudley) — a girl and a guy — and their plans to outrun an oncoming train on a trestle, 100 feet above a dry creek bed.

The plot serves only as a skeleton

for the play because it's largely dialogue and character-driven. Most of the action takes place at the creek bed and involves conversations between Pace and Dalton — both in their teens. Their talks bring to light themes of alienated youth, family and a possible, but ultimately hopeless, vision for the future.

This says nothing about the supporting performances, which were stellar in their ability to deliver on these themes of desolation. The cast consists of five actors, and what's great about a play with so few people is that each one has a chance to shine and hold the play together. When Dalton is eventually put in jail (the circumstances are best left for a viewer to discover), Steve Wehmeier delivers an effectively creepy, but heartfelt, performance as Chas Weaver, his jail-keeper.

Adam Leonard and Annie Harper Branson play Gin and Dray Chance, Dalton's parents. Their roles echo and reverberate because we see the

couple's troubles repeat themselves through Pace and Dalton.

A big theme among all the characters is the thrill of touch and being touched. Pace and Dalton eventually have a girlfriend and boyfriend kind of relationship, but Pace only wishes to be touched indirectly. This idea is carried through to the end when Dalton kisses Pace's dress and apparently brings her to orgasm.

The intensely intimate performances lend to the atmosphere of the Arena Theatre. Set design was minimal; lighting set the scene and changed to indicate indoor and outdoor locations.

The play, which will show tonight, Saturday and March 13 through 15, runs about 120 minutes with one 15-minute intermission. Tickets are available at the Robinson Theatre box office, the Hult Center for the Performing Arts and in the Ticket Office in the EMU.

Contact the Pulse reporter at aaronshakra@dailyemerald.com.

Memorial

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a postdoctoral student at Ohio State University. He also taught at both Harvard and Indiana before moving to Eugene and joining the University faculty in 1952.

Klemm helped to establish the undergraduate research program in organic chemistry. He served as the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 1960 to 1962 and again from 1968 to 1969, and as the associate dean of the grad

school from 1960 to 1962.

During his career at the University, Klemm remained as committed to his own work as he did to the work of his students. He published 175 scholarly papers while he was active on the University faculty and 35 more after his official retirement in 1990.

"He had a passion for his science that is not often seen these days," Haley said. "Even after his retirement, he was a fixture at the annual regional American Chemical Society meetings."

Professor LeRoy Klemm is survived by a daughter, Rebecca Klemm of Washington D.C.; a son, Richard Klemm of Naperville, Ill.; and two grandchildren. A daughter, Ann Klemm, died in 2002.

Memorial contributions may be made to the LeRoy H. Klemm Seminar and Undergraduate Research Fund in Chemistry, to the Nature Conservancy, to the Sierra Club, to the Obsidians or to Oregon Health and Science University.

Contact the reporter at aimeerudin@dailyemerald.com.

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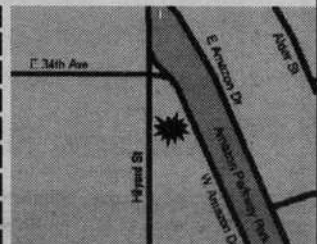
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