

The Arts

Theater department and Dame Agatha present 'The Hollow'

By DeAnn Dietrich
Of The Print

Beginning rehearsals for Clackamas Community College's theater production, Director Jack Shields is enthusiastic about the cast and crew for Agatha Christie's "The Hollow."

Following a College tradition, the selection of the play was decided by students at a meeting for all interested participants, from several choices presented by the director. Included in the five choices was Langford Wilson's, "The Mound Builders," with a cast

of seven, and a play entitled, "Crimes of the Heart," hosting a cast of six. The reason given for the selection tradition is "Because I have no notion of who will be here, in terms of numbers, interests, and competency levels," Shields said.

Creating the choice of plays, Shields considers previous performances. "I try to present to students and audiences as wide a range of dramatic styles as possible," he said.

Approximately 35 people auditioned for the show, one of the largest turnouts ever,

allowed an ease in casting a crew of twelve. The healthy show of interest confirmed the increase of awareness in the existence of the theater department within the last decade, Shields said.

The stage crew personnel were also selected during the audition. David Smith-English has returned as set designer. He will function as a carpenter and supervise scene construction.

Taking his responsibilities personally, Shields sees his job as, "Functioning as a teacher and a coach, but I also wear a director's hat to ensure public enjoyment." He also works closely with each individual, "By halfway through rehearsals, I feel close to everyone," he said. Even though competency levels may vary, he maintains that, "The urge to communicate is a primal and natural instinct to humans. I try to break the inhibitions and bad habits to let the instincts come out."

In "The Hollow," as in most Agatha Christie stories, there is a murder. Through the play the audience attempts to second-guess the murderer before the final scene arrives. Not only is there a murder, but the audience will witness the death scene, complete with the last gasping words of the dying man.

Is Shields worried about pulling off such a demanding scene? Apparently not, "I trust the instincts of even the first-time person on stage," he said.

Special effects for the death scene are downplayed to technical accuracy. In deciding what the wound should resemble, great care will be taken to research the calibre of the gun, the range from which it is fired, and the location on the body to ensure those last gasping moments.

Realistic quality is a focal point for costumer Lynn Myers. Researching the styles for the time and the area,

Myers also considers personalities and contrasts of characters in her selections.

Set in England, the play was given no specific date but was merely termed "the present." Myers was given the authority to decide the date within the parameters of the forties and fifties. Myers chose the early fifties because "we have more costumes on hand from that period."

Rehearsals for the play will attain a total of 110 to 130 hours before the play opens on Dec. 1. This is considered adequate time to develop a high quality show, Shields said. "If one can get over a hundred hours, it will be as good as it can get."

Appearing in "The Hollow" will be: Jeanine Kryza as Henrietta, David Harvey as Sir Henry, Maggie Bragg as Lady Lucy, Vonnie Davis as Midge, Neil Hass as Gudgeon, Patrick Sterling as Edward, Cindy Brown as Doris, Lynn Myers as Gerda,

Review

Cast, director make 'Chill' year's best

By J. Dana Haynes
Of The Print

First, put down this paper and go see "The Big Chill," which is playing all over town. The rest of us will wait here for you.

Back? Okay, good. For those of you who took my advice, you have just seen the best movie so far, of the year. Those of you who didn't—well, you got to read *The Print*. A no-lose scenario.

"The Big Chill" is far and away the best written, best directed, best filmed, best edited and best acted film to hit town it too long a time. The creation of writer/director Lawrence Kasdan, it is the story of an American generation.

The show begins with the suicide of "Alex," a troubled, 30-ish man whom the audience never meets. His death brings together his girl friend and the seven friends with whom he shared a house while attending the University of Michigan in the sixties. Back then, the eight friends had been the archetypical college crusaders, trying to change the world for the better.

Now, it's more than a decade later. The group includes a rich running-shoe magnate and his physician wife (Kevin Kline and Glenn Close), a television actor who could be Tom Selleck's doppelganger (Tom Berenger), a "journalist" working for *People* magazine (Jeff Goldblum), a disillusioned Vietnam vet who is deeply into drugs and



LAWRENCE KASDAN is the director and co-writer of Columbia Pictures' new comedy, "The Big Chill," starring Tom Berenger, Glenn Close, Jeff Goldblum, William Hurt, Kevin Kline, Mary Kay Place, Meg Tilly and JoBeth Williams. The Carson Productions Group, Ltd. film was produced by Michael Shamberg.

self-absorption (William Hurt), a big city public defender (Mary Kay Place), and a housewife and mother of two (JoBeth Williams).

The eighth "leading character" is Chloe, Alex's girlfriend who is in her early twenties (played by Meg Tilly).

This is the best cast to grace any movie in some time, and I can honestly say there is not one bad or even mediocre performance between them.

The story is about these eight people, what they feel, how they have changed, where they're going and where they've been. In hilariously funny and frighteningly personal scenes, we learn that Kline and Berenger are embarrassed by the amount of money they make schlepping shoes and acting in a TV private eye series.

Meanwhile, Goldblum is busy conning himself into thinking he's still a rebel with a cause, while "condensing anyone's life into a page and a half" for *People*.

Mary Kay Place now sees herself defending "scum" instead of America's downtrodden and she wants to have a baby (although she doesn't particularly want a husband). Williams feels unfulfilled in her marriage and motherhood, while Hurt is hurt, anguishing over a war injury and unsure of where his life is leading him.

These seven are counterbalanced by Chloe, a generation younger and somehow almost alien to their way of thinking. They are also countered by Williams' stuffy, excruciating husband (played

very nicely by Don Galloway, Sgt. Ed Brown of "Ironside").

"The Big Chill" is a wildly funny morality play (what?) about life in these United States. Kasdan's direction and script are flawless, making each of the eight principals unique and contrasting. In a word: Human. Kasdan wrote (or co-wrote) "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Continental Divide," "The Empire Strikes Back," "Return of the Jedi," and "Body Heat," which he also directed.

Like "Heat," "Chill" is the story of people in transition, often against their will. "Heat" was dark and hypnotic with William Hurt as a slightly unscrupulous attorney drawn down by his own weaknesses. In "Chill," we see our

characters also being led by their strengths and weaknesses: But laterally, not downward.

The other heroes of this film are cinematographer John Bailey (whose credits include "Continental Divide" with Kasdan and the monumentally moody remake of "Cat People"), who uses the lush scenery of Beaufort, South Carolina and the stately Tidalholm mansion to optimum advantage, making this one of the most picturesque movies since "The Black Stallion." Applause should also go the editor Carol Littleton ("Body Heat" and "E.T.") for making "Chill" drum-tight and yet well paced.

The last brava goes to Music Consultant Meg Kasdan (the director's wife?) for picking the sound track of the year. The incidental music includes golden oldies by Aretha Franklin, The Rascals, The Beach Boys, The Steve Miller Band, Spencer Davis, The Exciters, Three Dog Night, The Temptations, Smokey Robinson and my personal fave rave, Creedence Clearwater Revival. However, the best touch of all is the funeral services for Alex, wherein JoBeth Williams drones out a pipe-organ version of The Rolling Stones' "You Can't Always Get What You Want." Classic stuff.

"The Big Chill" is a must. To miss it would be to miss the to-date top choice for Best Comedy. It is currently playing at the Eastgate, Movie House and Town Square (in Beaverton).

Clackamas Community College

