

Play teaches life's darker lessons



Robert Crawford Clackamas Print

Li'l Bit, played by Clackamas alumna Heather Ovalle, suffers a moment of distress following a severe family feud.

Michelle Sanchez

The Clackamas Print

Heads will turn at Clackamas as the theater department presents, "How I Learned to Drive," a play by Paula Vogel that explores life, love and making it through the teen years.

According to the official play synopsis, it is, "A wildly funny, surprising and devastating tale of survival as seen through the lens of a troubling relationship between a young girl and an older man."

Kelly Miller, a member of the Greek chorus, said that she was especially excited about being part of the production of this Pulitzer Prize winning show.

"The most interesting part about this play is the format, and the feeling that it leaves the audience with," said Miller.

Heather Ovalle plays the lead role of Li'l Bit, a girl whose story is told from several different time frames. Ovalle is a graduate of Clackamas and is currently attending Portland State University.

Despite the fact that this is the first serious role that she has taken on, Ovalle's acting breathes life into the volatile character of Li'l Bit.

"You're just the story teller," said "It's my job to tell the story, and understanding the story makes it easier."

So what kind of show is "How I Learned to Drive?" The story deals with adult matter in a delicate way, that can be described as masterful.

James Sharinghousen, a member of the cast, stated that he felt that the show was "a dramady with adult matter."

Several members of the cast and crew also commented on the play's humor. Hannah Munsey, the project operator, who said, "The play is a little racy in some parts, but it's a very funny show."

So like the boxes of old film negatives that contain a little of everything, "How I Learned to Drive" has drama, romance and even music.

"The play isn't a musical," said Munsey, "but it adds a depth to the story."

The play will open Thursday Feb. 26, and run until March 8, at the Osterman Theater. Showtimes will be Thursday at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

There will be a matinee on Sundays at 2 p.m. The tickets are \$12 for general admission and \$10 for students. For more information and ticket reservations call 503-657-6923 or e-mail jens@clackamas.edu.

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Projector Operator

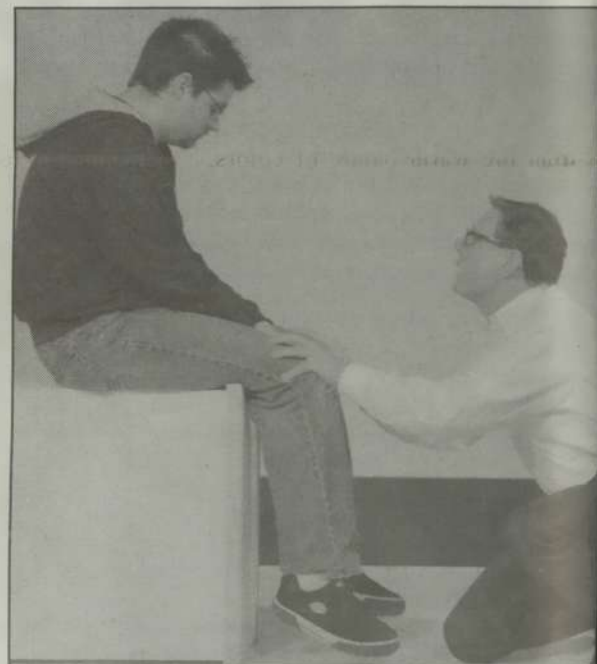


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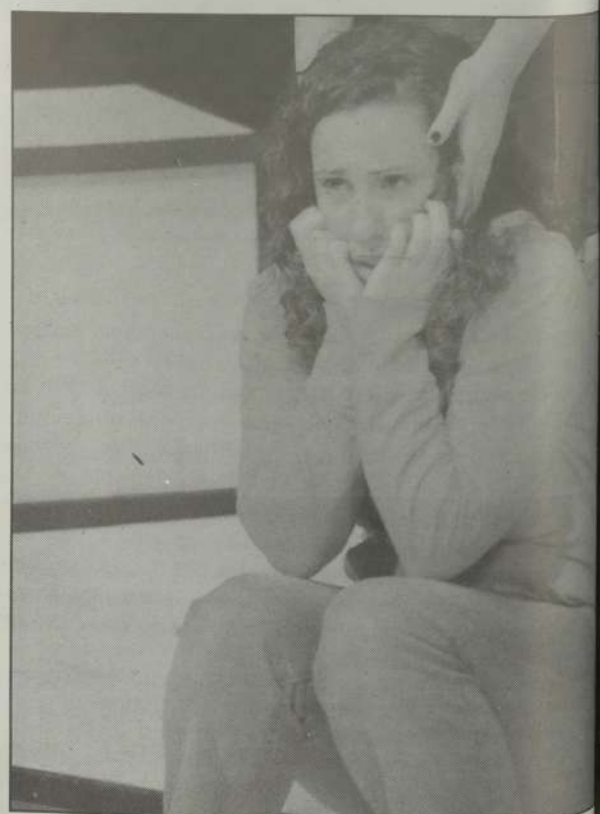
Above: After one too many martinis, Li'l Bit, above center, takes a long nap with the remaining members of the Greek chorus, from left to right, Kelly Miller, James Sharinghousen and Madelyn Marcott. The chorus is a physical manifestation of Li'l Bit's memories and each member portrays several personas throughout the show from family members, to classmates, to total strangers.

Above right: Uncle Peck, right, played by actor Brian Haliski, comforts Cousin Bobby, left, played by actor and Print staff writer Jake Whitten, after their fishing trip takes a sour note.

Right: During a heated discussion about sex and marriage, Li'l Bit's grandmother, played by Greek chorus member Kelly Miller, tries to cover her granddaughter's ears to shield her from the conversation.



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