



Top left: Madge Owens, played by Astrid Bloodgood, shares a kiss with her boyfriend Alan Seymour, played by Chayne Husband.

Middle left: Hal Carter, played by Mykel Illa, left, catches up with his college buddy Alan Seymour.

Bottom left: Flo Owens, left, played by Katrina Cannon, tries to convince Madge to stay.

Top right: Rosemary Sydney, played by Allison Andresen, talks to Irma Kronkite, played by Nicola Sampair, and Christine Schoenwalder played by Rachael Batey.

Bottom right: The cast of "Picnic" pauses for a photo after a dress rehearsal on March 1.

PICNIC

COLLEGE PRODUCTION BRINGS NEW LIFE TO OLD CHARACTERS

BY NICHOLAS ALLISON

It's Labor Day. Vacations are ending and the sun is sweltering. The setting takes place in a small town in Kansas, and it's filled with people preparing for a picnic that very night.

Hal Carter, played by Mykel Illa, is a drifter, who just arrived in town. The effect he, and this night, will have on those he meets will be momentous.

"Picnic," written by William Inge, opened Thursday, March 2 at Clackamas Community College in the Niemeyer Center. The play is directed by James Eikrem, with scenic and lighting design by Christopher Whitten, costume design by Alva Bradford and choreography by Laura Sue Hiszczynskij.

"Picnic," compared to "The Glass Menagerie" from fall term, has a cast almost thrice the size, with a total of 11 actors and actresses. Yet, it is clear they are as at home on stage as any of us would be in our own backyard.

"The aspect of being an unconfident, unsure person who's trying to fit in with a group of people who are definitely a higher class than me, it's definitely a task," said Illa.

He enjoyed performing in the play. "I've never done a play this old, there's a lot of ups and downs," said Illa. "It's a roller coaster of emotions. You get some laughs, you get some 'awws,' and you get some 'oh snaps.'"

Molly Bowman, who played Millie Owens, also found the play interesting.

"I really wanted to be in this show because it was something different," said Bowman. "It was something a little closer to real life than a big farce or something like that."

The set of "Picnic" is the backyard of two houses, one owned by Flo Owens, played by Katrina Cannon. It's also inhabited by her daughters Madge Owens, played by Astrid Bloodgood, and her sister Millie Owens, as well as Rosemary Sydney, played by Allison Andresen, a school teacher renting their spare room.

The other home belongs to Helen Potts, played by Susan McKenna, a woman taking care of her mother. The stage is well crafted and feels natural, with both homes reflecting their owners well.

Sixty-four years from the play's original premiere, the humor is still strong today.

"[The play] still touches us, however many years later," said Eikrem. "You recognize the people and you recognize the relationships."

One thing that stands clear is that, in its time, this play was clearly unique, with a number of unique characters. Examples include the smart but tomboyish Millie Owens, who recently gained a college scholarship, her single mother Flo Owens, caring for of both her daughters alone, the supremely independent Rosemary Sydney and the shy but boisterous Hal Carter.

Every character has depth, and it feels like you could meet one of them on the street today. It would only stand out because they drew your interest, not because they don't fit in. The actors portrayed their parts well, creating a memorable experience for any who sees it.

"Picnic" will continue playing through March 12, Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$11 for adults, \$9 for seniors and \$5 for students.

"I really wanted to be in this show because it was something different. It was something a little closer to real life than a big farce or something like that."
—Molly Bowman