“Stitching” Premieres at JMU Experimental Theater

By Rachel Swartzendruber
Burg Editor

Written by explicit and controversial Scottish playwright Anthony Neilson, “Stitching” is a two-person play focusing on the nitty-gritty of life: sex.

"Stitching" is opening in the James Madison University Experimental Theater, otherwise known as the student theater. "We do can basically anything we want in there," said Kat Wisener, a fourth-year theater major and director of Stitching. "It's the student theater.”

JMU students who are interested in doing a production in the student theater simply need to propose a project to the faculty, present a good case as to why they want to do this play, and be approved. Wisener became acquainted with ‘Stitching’ one year ago during her term in JMU’s study abroad program, which placed her in London studying theater. She saw it in a French theater and loved the show.

"I couldn’t relate to the specific details, but I could definitely relate to the emotion," said Wisener.

The play is based around a couple, Abby and Stuart, who have been together for four years. Due to an unexpected pregnancy, they find themselves in a situation in which they must examine their commitment to one another. They must "pick apart their sexual history, stitch by painful stitch," as said by the Bush Theatre in England.

The play doesn’t stay in chronological order, but rather jumps around in time, analyzing the relationship from many vantage points.

"It gives you chills," said Wisener.

"It's about being in love with someone so much that you can't leave them, but love isn't enough."

“Stitching” premiered in Traverse, England in 2002, directed by writer Neilson himself. The play received incredibly mixed reviews. Some viewed the crass nature of the play as "brave" while others were too disturbed to focus on deeper meaning.

The Edinburgh Evening News said, "Anthony Neilson has created a tragic, sometimes hilarious and always disturbing piece of theatre.

The Evening Standard said, "A deeply mesmerising, if shocking, experience as a couple smashes through taboo after taboo in a harrowing sexual tug of war." Lyn Gardner of The Guardian said, "Stitching isn’t easy to watch."

Frisbee Golf Course Opens in Harrisonburg

By Kevin Ressler
Staff Writer

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