

SUN STAR

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Play highlights minor players from Shakespeare

by Ryan Bateman

Last weekend, the UAF Theatre department began showing Tom Stoppard's "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead," a hilarious look at two minor characters of Shakespeare's "Hamlet."

The performance directed by Anatonly Antohin, the play is not only entertaining, but also extremely relevant to today's world, featuring two men totally disconnected from a situation being used to implement governmental will while also operating to ponder the questions of the influence of the common man on politics.

The writing of the play obviously turns the world of Shakespeare upside down, casting minor characters as main characters, but the Theatre department also added their own twist. In traditional Shakespearean productions, men played female roles. In this production, women play the male roles of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Hadassah Nelson, who plays Rosencrantz, expounded on the different and more analytic process that Antohin brings to the stage with this production, saying, "It's a totally different process, we spent the first few weeks just going over the concepts. It makes you feel very involved in the show."

This new perspective brings a breath of fresh air to the performance, and can be clearly seen in the enthusiasm of the actors and crew. Stage manager Brian Lyke explained the processes that have gone into the show, explaining that the cast and crew spend three hours a day four days of the week working together, but it doesn't end there. "Everyone's got it on their minds during the off time," Lyke commented, "It's a lot of work." However, their work isn't for naught, as this production of "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead" absolutely hits the mark with a perfect blend of light-hearted comedy and disparate, socially relevant tragedy.

Showings on Apr. 25 and 26 at 8:15 p.m. in the Lee H. Salisbury Theatre, and there will be an additional matinee showing on the 27th at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$7 to \$15 and can be purchased in the Wood Center or at the Theatre Box Office.