

# Oleanna explores college, conflicts

By MEGAN CRAMER  
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER

It is a scene most of us know well: a college student meets with her professor to discuss her grades and the class material. She tells him she doesn't understand a lot of the lessons, and he in turn tries all he can to help her to understand.

But this scene progresses onto a plane that few of us have experienced: The student charges her teacher with sexual harassment. And the power play begins.

The name of this power play is *Oleanna*, a drama by David Mamet. The Anthony Aston Players will present it in the Ring Theatre in Scales Fine Arts Center at 8 p.m. Sept. 25, 26 and 27.

Junior Shane Harris is the director, and juniors Jenny Harrison and Daniel Stern play the student and the professor.

"I think that (the play) is very pertinent and relevant to a college audience," Harris said.

"Even if no one has been victimized in the way that Carol believes she has, there are many dilemmas in the play that professors and students can relate to," Harris said.

But Harris said it frustrates him when people insist the play is only about sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment is the vehicle through which power and communication are investigated," he said.

"To me it's a very raw study of conflict. I think it forces us to look at what college education is doing outside of the classroom and inside."

Inside this specific classroom, there are only two people.

It is a full length, two-person play, where both actors have to be on stage the whole time. The lines are basically evenly divided between them.

The challenge for the actors is enormous, Stern said. "You have no chance to go catch a smoke during the show."

Harris said there were advantages to having such a minimal cast.

"The experience has been very good in that

you can really focus your attention both as actors and director," he said.

"The difficulty lies in the volume of the work. It's important to keep the actors from getting discouraged," he said.

But even if the actors and director can move beyond the workload, they are still left with Mamet's signature dizzying dialogue. "The number one challenge is the dialogue," Harris said.

Harrison agreed, saying, "It's so erratic. And the sentences are completely disjointed. 'You can't follow one thought to the next, which makes it difficult to communicate and memorize.'"

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Jenny Harrison  
Junior

A panel discussion was held Saturday with Michael Sinclair, a professor of history; Nancy Nelson, a visiting assistant professor of anthropology and Lula Leake, the dean of the summer session, to discuss the issue of sexual harassment and the other issues regarding college life brought up in the play, Buescher said.

Buescher and his assistant, freshman Jennifer Blevins, have been doing about five times as much publicity for this show than is usually done for Anthony Aston productions.

"I think this is one of the most aggressive shows that Anthony Aston has encountered and I think that publicity should match the quality of the show," Buescher said.

Each year, the Anthony Aston Players produce two student directed and designed shows. *Oleanna* is this year's first.

It will be followed by *Steel Magnolias*, playing Nov. 21, 22 and 23.

Auditions for *Magnolias* will be held Oct. 21-22.

# A musical dawn

## Composer to premiere work based on Angelou poem

By ROBERT SHAW  
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REVIEWER

A unique collaboration of artistic endeavor will kick off the Year of the Arts at 8 p.m. Sept. 28 at Wait Chapel. Composer-in-residence Dan Locklair and Reynolds Professor of American Studies Maya Angelou have joined forces to produce "Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra based on Maya Angelou's poem 'On the Pulse of Morning.'" The piece is based primarily on the poem Angelou wrote for President Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration.

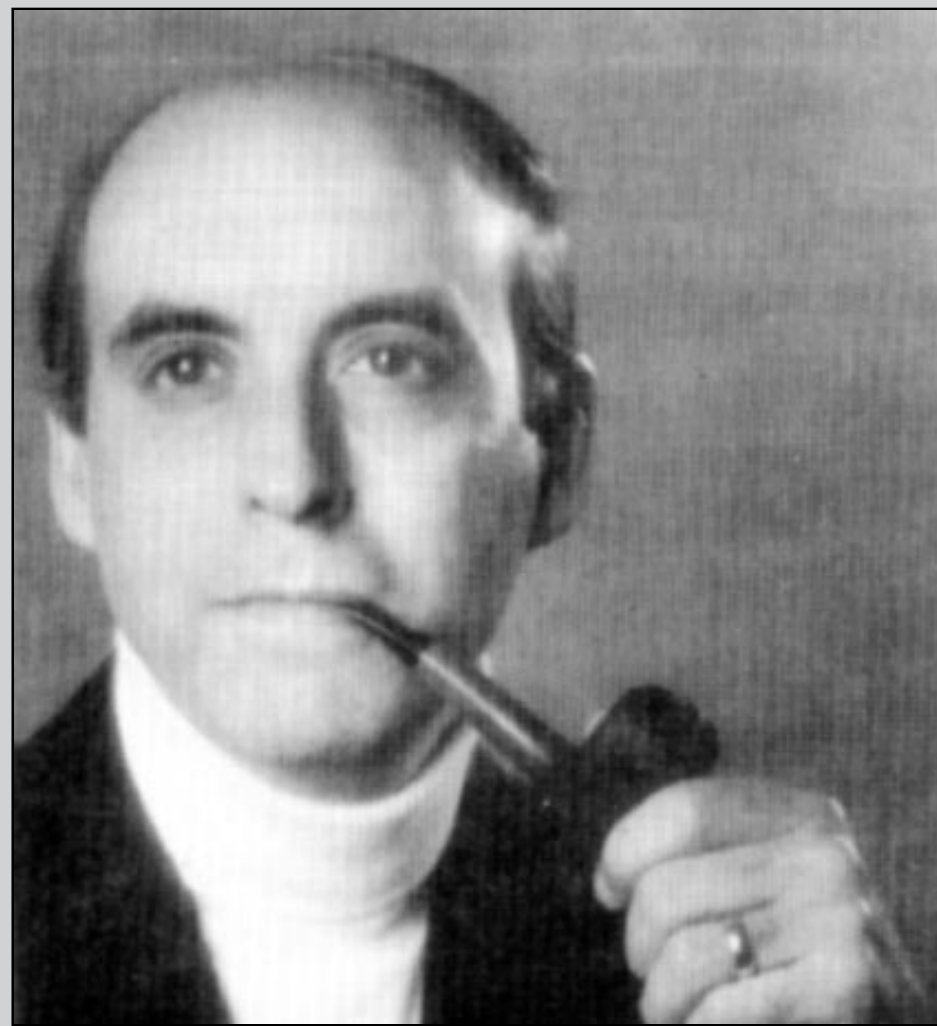


Angelou will narrate the work, to be played by the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony under the direction of maestro Peter Perret and a special chorus from the university community.

Locklair said that he believes a tone poem is an appropriate musical form because his work was inspired by an extra-musical, though artistic, source. The tone poem was conceived in the 19th century as a way of expressing either stories or specific patterns of feelings through music. Indeed, Locklair takes nonmusical inspiration very seriously. "A painting or even words can be an important impetus for musical creation," he said.

After Locklair presented his idea for the collaboration to Angelou and the University as part of the Year of the Arts in 1994, he began the task of composition. The work was inspired by such monuments as Aaron Copland's "Lincoln Portrait" and Joseph Schwantner's "New Morning for the World", based on the memory of Martin Luther King, Jr., both tone poems with larger social meanings and based on literary work.

However, "Since Dawn" is unique in that it is a choral work, and that the poet herself will be the narrator. These two traits will serve to make the performance more personal. The private premiere occurred at Angelou's residence two months after it



Courtesy of Dan Locklair

**Dan Locklair, the composer-in-residence and a professor of music, is a prolific composer. Most recently, he wrote an organ work for the First Presbyterian Church of Topeka, Kan.**

was completed. Locklair played a reduction of it on the piano to an enthusiastic group of Angelou's close friends. Along with the music itself, Angelou was touched by Locklair's dedication, "To Maya Angelou and to all artists who, through their art, seek to make the world a better place." Both composer and poet felt that the gesture was especially appropriate for an important part of the Year of the Arts, which was originally conceived to be a revitalization and inspiration to the arts at a place with the motto *Pro Humanitate*.

Along with the primary work, the program will include a Brouwer's guitar concerto, "Retraps Capalans," played by Patricia Dixon, an instructor in music, and Mozart's Double Piano Concerto played by Peter Kairoff, an assistant professor of music, and Louis Goldstein, a professor of music. The Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony will accompany these works.

Tickets for students and faculty are limited. They will be available only at the Theater Box Office in the Scales Fine Arts Center today and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students planning to attend must pick tickets up on these days. Each student wanting a ticket must come to the ticket office in person with his or her I.D. card.

# Bourgeois life or heroin: Which would you choose?

By JOHN E. SPITLER  
CONTRIBUTING REVIEWER

*Trainspotting*, the red-hot import from Great Britain, has been hailed by many critics as this year's *Pulp Fiction*.

My question is this: Just because a film is brimming with profanity, crime and clever dialogue and is populated by likable lowlifes with heroin problems, must it be compared to Quentin Tarantino's 1994 classic? Clearly, the answer is yes. Although the two films are actually quite different from each other, they share a remarkable energy and style that clash exquisitely with the dark worlds they portray.

*Trainspotting*, based on the 1993 novel of the same name, is an exuberant look at the lives of a group of young Scottish heroin addicts. The story involves the film's protagonist and narrator, Mark Renton (played by Ewan McGregor) and his repeated attempts to kick his heroin habit and "choose life." These efforts are continually thwarted by his addict comrades, who keep dragging him back into robberies and drug deals. Will Renton be able to

go straight? The film's ending gives us a tentative answer, but it hardly matters. The thrill of *Trainspotting* is just following the characters through awful tragedies and wickedly funny misadventures.

The fact that *Trainspotting* is at times lots of fun has been a target of criticism for the film's detractors. Some feel that heroin addiction is glorified in the film. Frankly, I find that ridiculous. Heroin addiction is as glamorous here as alcoholism was in *Leaving Las Vegas*, which is to say, not very. Yes, these characters are enjoying themselves while shooting up. However, the viewer never loses sight of the foulness of their lifestyle. Renton and his friends live in squalor, steal to support their habit, cause their families nothing but grief, scoff at the specter of AIDS hanging over them and in general show little respect for human life, even when one of their own dies.

That the film is enjoyable despite all of this is due largely to Ewan McGregor's exceptional performance as Renton. McGregor's bright, youthful face makes despising Renton virtually impossible. He conveys such charm and apparent innocence that even while watching him thoughtlessly destroy a friend's life (first by breaking up his relationship, then by getting him hooked on heroin), we still like him. We hope he'll clean up his life, but we

know that even if he doesn't, we won't hold it against him. The cast generally succeeds at humanizing a group of often subhuman characters, but McGregor is far and away the standout, and his performance is the sort from which stars are born.

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McGregor's brilliance is likely a product of his familiarity with *Trainspotting's* trio of filmmakers. Director Danny Boyle, writer John Hodge and producer Andrew Macdonald previously collaborated on the 1994 thriller *Shallow Grave*, in which McGregor co-starred. *Grave* is a wonderfully tense film in which three friends take in a mysterious boarder. When he dies and a suitcase full of money is found in his room, the "friends" each become

quite cutthroat in their efforts to keep the money for themselves. I favor *Grave's* tight narrative structure and claustrophobic feel over the latter's more jumbled and episodic rambles. Both films, though, depict an overwhelmingly cynical worldview, especially with regards to the nature of friendship.

In *Trainspotting*, this cynicism is what may be mistaken for the film's condoning of drug abuse: Boyle and Hodge refuse to present the non-heroin-addicted world as a great place. Renton's voice-over rant at the film's beginning neatly sums up that sentiment, as he rails against the horrors of bland middle-class existence. The message is not that drugs are good, but that the "real world" isn't especially worthwhile.

*Trainspotting* (the title is never explained in the film) is a fairly wild ride, and I think it's apt to consider your feelings on *Pulp Fiction* when deciding whether or not to see it. If you enjoyed that film, chances are you'll enjoy this too. However, if that film's subject matter offended you, you probably won't fare much better with *Trainspotting*. At the time of this writing, *Trainspotting* is currently playing only once nightly at the North Point Five Cinemas. If you miss it there, though, don't worry. Student Union is planning to show the film Nov. 15-17.

## EYE ON THE ARTS

### Band to shoot video at Baity's

Blakrayn, a Winston-Salem-based band, will shoot its first-ever music video 10 p.m. Saturday at Baity's. The band fuses jazz, rock, soul and world music for an eclectic sound.

The video is being produced by students at the North Carolina School of the Arts and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and follows the band's debut EP *Rainmaker*. It will be submitted to MTV's Buzz Clip feature.

Baity's is at 521 Baity Street. For information call 727-0275.

### Opera to go on as planned

Despite the Sept. 10 death of general director Norman Johnson, the Piedmont Opera Theatre will present this fall's performances as planned. Giuseppe Verdi's *Il Travatore* will be performed Nov. 1, 3 and 5. For ticket prices and other information, call 759-2277. Performances are at the Stevens Center, 405 W. Fourth St.

The company's press release said Johnson would have wanted the season to continue as planned.

# Workshops draw writing into Year of Arts

By CHARLES STARKS  
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

During the planning for the Year of the Arts, some members of the Year of the Arts Committee noticed that the English department was somewhat left out.

"Literary arts were a very important part of campus that weren't recognized," said senior Craig Joseph, a committee member.

So Joseph and other members of the committee decided to change that with a series of six writing workshops.

Titled "Write from the Start," the workshops will bring authors from both on and off campus to DeTamble Hall and the Ring Theatre to discuss writing with students, faculty and other members of the community.

All the workshops will feature authors who either grew up or are living in the South. "How living in the South, growing up in the South affect how (the authors) write is one of the major things we've asked them to focus on," Joseph said.

Each workshop will consist of two one-hour segments, Joseph said. In the first hour the author will speak generally about writing. "They'll discuss how they got into the types of writing they do or the challenges they face in the genre they write in," he said.

The first workshop, to be held at 7 p.m. Monday in DeTamble, will feature Julie Edelson, the coordinator of research and sponsored programs. Edelson helped Joseph organize the workshops.

"I'm going to speak for an hour on the influence of region on prose fiction writers," Edelson said. "Then (attendees) will be asked to share their own work."

There will be some discussion of workshop participants' writing, though it will not be anything intimidating, Edelson said. "Hopefully I'll lead that, to diffuse any bombs that may go off," she said.

Edelson teaches a writing workshop class

each spring and is the author of two novels, *No News is Good* and *Bad Housekeeping*.

The semester's second workshop, to be held Oct. 23, will feature Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, and Ralph Wood, the Easley professor of religion, who will discuss the work of Flannery

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O'Connor. The workshop will focus on letter writing and journals, Joseph said.

Romulus Linney, a professor at Columbia University, will run the third workshop, to be held Nov. 9. Linney has written several Broadway plays, including *Holy Ghosts*, the university's second Mainstage production this year. During the second hour of this workshop, students will take part in stage readings, Joseph said.

Spring workshops include one on biographical writing, featuring Penny Niven,

a Greensboro resident who wrote James Earl Jones's biography.

A poetry workshop in the spring will feature A.R. Ammons, a former poet-in-residence who is to fill that role again next semester, as well as a poetry slam by students. And the spring's final workshop will focus on journalism.

Although specific students have already been asked to bring their writings to each workshop to share with other participants, all workshop attendees are free to do so, Joseph said.

The workshops are free and open to everyone, Joseph said. "Anybody who likes to write and wants to hear how professional authors work their craft (is welcome)," Joseph said.

None of the authors are being paid for running the workshops, Joseph said. Edelson said she hoped students who attended the workshops would become more conscious of the context in which they write.

Joseph concurred, saying, "Maybe it will spur people to be a little more disciplined with their writing, to write what they know."