

# Arts & Entertainment

## *Dodding presents his passion for plays*

By Beth Ellis  
Old Gold and Black Reviewer

As a trumpet blast swelled through the air, Ed Wilson, the senior vice president, invited those gathered in the Scales Fine Arts Center lobby to come see, hear, share, witness and proclaim the

"Passion of Jesus Christ." The Wake Forest Promenade Passion Play opened at 6:30 p.m. Palm Sunday, April 5 and ran through April 7. This grand event and true gift to the university community was presented in connection with the university's Year of Religion in American Life.

The text of this promenade drama was adapted by James Dodding, and adjunct professor of theater from the medieval texts of passion and mystery plays. These plays were presented in cathedrals in England to an audience that traveled between scenes.

The university's production was similarly spoken and sung in verse with live instrumentation to a traveling audience. The language of the play, which was in modern English, reflected the rhythmic nature of the medieval church dramas.

Music for the production was selected and arranged by Teresa Radomski, associate professor of music, and included the talents of 58 musicians.

The university Gospel Choir, the Wake Forest Baptist Church Choir, Billy Hamilton's Bluegrass Band and a number of instrumentalists participated. Musical selections ranged from Latin chants of the medieval period to traditional

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James Dodding  
Adjunct professor of theater

church hymns. The Gospel Choir, trumpeters and drummers accompanied the action of the drama and led the audience in an Easter hymn at the play's close.

The cast of the Wake Forest Promenade Passion play represents a wide cross-section of the university community. Students of every year, faculty, faculty families and alumni participated in the drama. The cast began practicing early in March in preparation for this event. Rehearsals have taken place outdoors on the actual acting areas.

The play is divided into 16 episodes and lasts approximately 75 minutes. The audience gathers in the lobby of Scales where the first episode, "the greeting of the audience," takes place.

The audience is then led outside to the steps facing the music wing where angels descend the stairs and sing of the works of God at creation. They prepare the way for the figure of God to appear.

God, played by Chaplain Ed Christman, announces that he will send his son Jesus to earth. The action of the play then follows Jesus, played by sophomore J.P. Stephens, through his baptism, teachings, miracles, arrest, crucifixion and resurrection.

The audience follows the drama on foot around Davis Field, to the Sculpture Garden and finally to the hill in front of Polo Residence Hall. The total walking distance is approximately half a mile, and the

main walk — The Way of the Cross — is approximately 300 yards. The audience is accompanied throughout by ushers as they travel behind the cast members.

The Promenade Passion Play was an exciting signature event for directors James Dodding and senior Daniel Stern and for the university's Year of Religion in American Life. Dodding said that this play was the very first outdoor "promenade style" passion play to be presented in the southern United States.

What made this production unique was its coincidence with the campus grounds and daily life of the university. No artificial lighting or scenery was used and the main buildings, and roads near the play's setting remained open.

In fact, one of the play's key scenes, "the trial of Jesus" takes place around the large sign that reads "James Ralph Scales Fine Arts Center." Dodding related how the directors decided against covering up the sign, wishing to let the campus, just as it stands, participate in the drama. "Nature's own light, nature's own setting and Wake Forest's own buildings help us tell this story," he said.

Dodding commented on both the power and the authenticity of an outdoor "promenade style" passion play. Having directed the production of similar plays on an indoor stage, he noted that what the production leaves behind in traditional theatrics when it moves outdoors, it gains in a new kind of power.

Christman elaborated on this theme of authenticity and power. He said that the events of Christ's Passion as told in the Bible took place within the life of a community.

"One must remember," he said, "that regular people were doing other things while Jesus was being crucified. When Jesus came he en-



Kim Robinson/Old Gold and Black

In the Promenade Passion Play to celebrate Easter and the Year of Religion in American Life, sophomore J.P. Stephens portrays Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

tered a world of commerce, business and religion. That is what incarnation means." Similarly, this production of the Promenade Passion Play did not isolate itself from the sights and sounds of university life. Rather, it used the buildings, the grounds and the people of the University to tell the story of Christ's Passion.

Many of the scenes from Jesus' life that were dramatized included the presence of crowds. In a unique way this drama transforms the audience into its own prop and allows the natural flow and murmur of the crowd to form its setting.

Children ran ahead of their parents to catch a glimpse of Jesus, people sat, knelt and stood on the grass beneath the trees of Davis field where "The Sermon on the Mount" was dramatized, and the road to the cross, which was uphill and winding, the audience traveled behind the struggling Jesus.

Dodding said that how the outdoor setting, which allows the audience to "share the same space and breathe the same air as the actors and actresses" empowers the production.

In the chilling crucifixion scene, the last words of Jesus, "It is finished!" resound off the bricks of

Wingate Hall to produce a haunting echo. When asked how this production fits into the life of the university during this Year of Religion Chaplain Christman spoke of this echo.

"Christ's Passion was the foremost of all Christian sacred journeys," he said, and this production served to "plant that story in the ground of Wake Forest."

Long after the production was finished the remembrance of its events, like echoed words, will belong to the people and the ground of the campus.

## British *Monty* reveals it all for the Academy

By Rad Hallman  
Contributing Reviewer

*The Full Monty* is the first of this year's Academy Awards Best Picture nominees to be released onto video. This offering from England is a bizarre mix of *Flashdance*, *Striptease* and *Showgirls* with a truly British comedic twist thrown in.

In this instance, the dancers struggling to make a living are overweight, out of shape out of work British steel workers from the town of Sheffield, England.

The movie begins with a mundane yet effective visual contrast between the Sheffield of 20 years ago that was a "city on the move" to the city today where the steel mills have been shut down and a couple of unemployed workers are trying to steal a girder to make a few extra quid.

Gaz, played by Robert Carlyle (last seen by American audiences as the psychotic Begbie in *Trainspotting*), is down on his luck along with his fellow blokes until he gets the ultimate idea of starting a male strip show after he sees a sold-out Chippendale show in town.

His colleagues are not too impressed with the idea, but there is not a whole lot else to do in a town such as Sheffield. The lovely ladies of Sheffield become interested in the idea when word spreads that the boys are going to go all the way and reveal "the full monty."

Gaz's struggle to retain joint-custody of his son is reminiscent of the cheesy drama that was injected into *Striptease*, but, in this case, it is far more poignantly observed and more humorous than the Demi Moore schlock that was forced upon movie audiences a few years ago.

While it may seem that *The Full Monty* was simply the obligatory independent film that the Academy needs to include in its Best Picture list, it holds far more endearing qualities than the big ship that floated away with all of the hardware a couple of weeks ago.

Unlike *Titanic*, *The Full Monty* delivers a fully realized, fully characterized script that ends at the climax and refuses to wallow in the any sort of boring and hokey epilogue, which makes it

worthy of the Oscar nomination it received during the Academy Awards.

This film begins as a catalogue of middle class British life and then moves into a hilarious satire of life and much of the adult entertainment that remains popular throughout the world.

Perhaps the characters in the film were novelties to those who came to watch it, and perhaps the film itself was a foreign novelty for those Americans who saw it and voted it as one of the best of the year. However, *The Full Monty* came along with no pretensions and not many zeroes attached to its budget. It may be forgotten as the years go on, but *The Full Monty* achieves what other movies may never even hope for — pure entertainment.



Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Hugo Speer as Guy and Paul Barber as Horse are just two of the men who have the guts to reveal the full monty.

## Tedford opens and closes with Moliere

*17th century comedy Tartuffe is his last performance*

By Elizabeth Hoyle  
Arts and Entertainment Editor

Harold Tedford, a professor and director of theatre, will conclude his 32-year tenure with Moliere's comedy *Tartuffe*. He said, "Moliere for my first show as director and my last show as director. Nice bookends, I think."

First performed in 1664 for Louis XIV at the court of Versailles, *Tartuffe* has remained one of the most popular French comedies for three centuries.

*Tartuffe* traces the story of religious hypocrite Tartuffe, junior Jeff Schoenheit, who cons his way into the home of Orgon, junior Drew Droege.

Captured by Tartuffe's professions of piety and closeness to God, Orgon gives him property and his daughter's hand in marriage.

Other characters, including his wife Elmire, played by junior Megan Cramer, try to reveal Tartuffe's scandalous ulterior motives to Orgon. Tedford said, "At the main comic level, the play is about obsession. Everyone tries to tell Orgon he's being hoodwinked by Tartuffe, but he persists in believing in the man's religious virtue."

Orgon's daughter, senior Elizabeth Thalheimer; Orgon's mother, junior Heather McClain; and the maid, freshman Aileen Socrates, also play a role in being deceived or convincing others of their naivete.

The language of the play presents a challenge to the actors. The rhymed couplets of Richard Wilbur's English translation could sound trite and silly if not presented carefully. Tedford said, "The students have to work against the rhyme to avoid sounding like Dr. Seuss."

The set, decorated in 17th century French detail, was designed by Darwin Payne, an adjunct professor of theatre. The period costumes were designed by Mary Wayne-Thomas, an assistant professor of theatre, and the lighting by Jonathan Christman, a production manager.

Cramer said, "It's been an exciting experience of work on a period piece because it's so different from the usual contemporary works. It's also intimidating because *Tartuffe* is so well known. Hopefully we'll do it justice."

Performances of *Tartuffe* begin 8 p.m. April 10 and will be presented through April 19 on the Main Stage in Scales Fine Arts Center.



Courtesy of Wake Forest University

Elmire, played by junior Megan Cramer, and Orgon, played by junior Drew Droege, will not be duped by Tartuffe, junior Jeff Schoenheit. *Tartuffe* will be performed on the Main Stage of the Scales Fine Arts Center April 10-19 at 8 p.m.

Proceeds from the matinee performance April 18 will create scholarships for university theater students in honor of Tedford.

Tickets are available at the box office and are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. The box office is open weekdays 12-5:30 p.m. and can be reached at Ext. 5295.