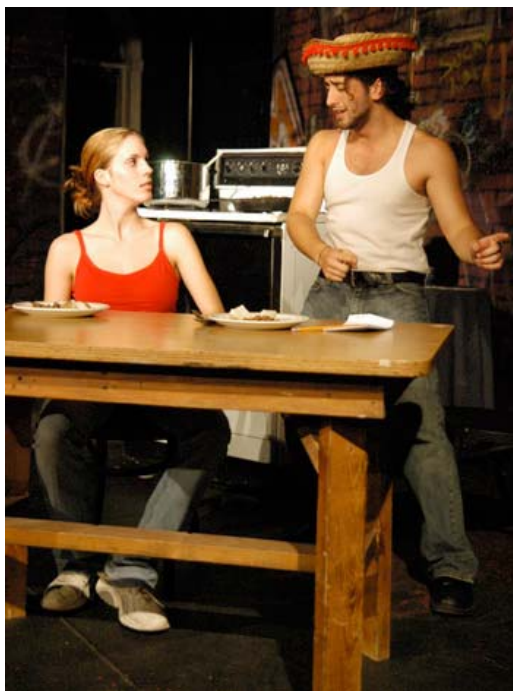


DAILY TARGUM

Students showcase Silverstein's darker side

Elizabeth Lyver, *Daily Targum*
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Media Credit: Dan Bracaglia/Staff Photographer
Cabaret Theatre members debuted "An adult evening with Shel Silverstein" last night on Douglass campus, and the show includes Rutgers College senior James Herrera and Douglass College junior Corynn Egreczky.

"Meat and potatoes:" that's what you get for several scenes of a Shel Silverstein-based comedy now playing at the Cabaret Theatre.

You might never think it would be possible to tell a story using only these three words. That's the challenge before the student theatre, which is teaming up with Albus Cavus for the production.

Four scenes of "meat and potatoes" comprise the skit, "Thinking up a New Name for the Act," one of the 10 mini-comedies that make up "An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein."

Last night the performance opened at the Cabaret Theatre on Douglass campus.

Directed by Rutgers College senior Daniel Swern, the show offers audiences a new perspective on the man who wrote "Where the Sidewalk Ends" in 1974.

"I started looking for work that would be age-appropriate for college kids, so I went to the drama bookshop in New York," Swern said Wednesday night after a performance reserved for friends of the cast.

"I came across Shel Silverstein, and I started reading his stuff and laughed out loud," he said.

Unlike his previous books of poetry such as "A Light in the Attic" and "The Giving Tree," written for young children, the skits delve into darker themes such as prostitutes, dead ponies and the mafia.

The cast of the show is made up of eight students.

The set is designed to create a dark atmosphere. Swern said the brick walls covered in graffiti serve to set the mood he was looking for.

"I wanted to get that dark alley feel," Swern said.

"I'd obviously seen all the [graffiti] work done all around New Brunswick, and I had a couple of friends who work with them, so they gave me some contact information, and I got eight different artists," he said.

Students showcase Silverstein's darker side (continued)

Swern said he also received help building the set from an employee at the George Street Playhouse.

The show includes original music composed by Rutgers College senior Eric Burchfield, who will also play guitar in the performances.

Making a cameo on the set is The Giving Tree, well known from one of Silverstein's poems. The tree will serve as a canvas for the names of those who wish to donate money to Elijah's Promise, an organization dedicated to helping low-income residents of central New Jersey.

The show opened last night and continues through next Saturday, Dec. 9.

Another performance will be held tonight at 8 p.m. and again tomorrow at 8 p.m. and 12 a.m. Sunday.

More performances will be held at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7 through Saturday Dec. 9. An additional midnight performance will be held Friday Dec. 8.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$10 for non-students.