




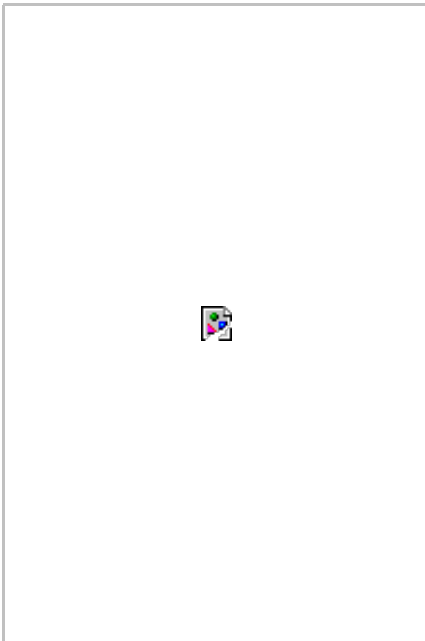
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Characters shine in 'One Acts'

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 January 14th, 2011 by Laura Malkiewich



Kerry Mahuron '10 and Alex Garrett '14 star in "Fix It," a one-act play written by Samantha Toh '11 and directed by Morielle Stroethoff '12. (Courtesy of Michael Rooney)

Heidi Thorsen '12, producer of Ram's Head Theatrical Society's "**The Original Winter One Acts**," claims that theater is "inherently collaborative." Her focus on unity in the producer's note of the program is directly reflected in the highly unified show she has put together. This year's "One Acts" go back to the basics of the one-room play, with each play taking place in a single living room with a single couch. The contrast against these living spaces solidifies the characteristic differences between each play and its protagonist. Still, the similarity between the personal spaces emphasizes connections between people and the situations that make us all human.

The first play, "Dear ChickFlickChick" follows the story of a smart and sensible movie critic who is being coerced by her roommate into thinking that her life might be modeling a love story. I swear it's not half as sappy as it sounds. Rather, the play is actually honest about how dealing with love in movies and real life

can be heartbreakingly different. Director and writer Olivia Haas '11 may be too pessimistic when she claims in her note that her play doesn't address "serious issues that need serious attention." The play is smart to focus attention on the idea that people need to think as critically about their own relationships as they do about fictional ones. Moreover, the play's execution is well done; the setting is so girl-friendly that I almost wish it was my Wheat Thins-infested living room. Additionally the acting is sincere enough to make me feel awkward in my seat. Win.



Alex Walker '13 and Gianna Masi '11 star in "Dear ChickFlickChick," written and directed by Olivia Haas '11. The Ram's Head Theatrical Society's "The Original Winter One Acts" run Jan. 13-15 at 8 p.m. in Pigott Theater. (Courtesy of Michael Rooney)

The second play of the night, "The Safety," takes a bit of a fantastical turn. Rodrigo Pena '11 writes a play that starts out as a crime thriller and turns into a comedy of character sketches. The script is hilarious, including entertaining renditions of your typical drunk frat boy, desperate party girl, dopey crook, pregnant woman, that girl that just won't shut up until someone has to hit her and the white-collar schemer. All of them are portrayed in a quite posh living room where the story of a murder-turned-robbery-turned-party goes wrong. Director Patrick Kelly '12 hits the mark by honing in on the hilarity of the characters' stupidity in each increasingly ridiculous situation. Although the audience may honestly be as confused as the characters by the end of the play, living the play line by line will ensure entertainment.

The final play of the night takes a more serious tone and is the most moving. "Fix It," written by Samantha Toh '11, deals with the story of Molly, a housewife who is desperately trying to make her life into something it once was by focusing on the love she once felt. For a student production, "Fix It" is surprisingly poignant. Set in a disheveled living room of passion and a cold kitchen of shame, this play epitomizes what makes people more heartbreaking than the relationships they are in. Kerry Mahuron '10 is incredibly touching as Molly; she unravels before the audience slowly but brilliantly. With that, "One Acts" ends with the strongest show of the night.

Overall, “One Acts” this year does exactly what the producer has planned. The three plays show a diverse and yet unified look at true characters. Each play is well crafted and concise. None of the shows feels unfinished and yet none of them drags – the show runs a reasonable 90 minutes including set changes between plays. In sum, the show focuses on how situations reveal who people really are more than what real people would do in fictitious situations.

“The Original Winter One Acts” will be showing this weekend, Jan. 13-15 at 8 p.m. in Pigott Theater. Tickets are \$8 for students, \$12 general admission and are available at tickets.stanford.edu, White Plaza and at the door.

 [Original Winter One Acts](#), [Ram's Head](#)

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