
Black Box Theater Shares "Proud Monster"

Contributed by Kayla Robertson
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Wednesday and Thursday of last week, the Black Box Drama Club presented its latest work: "Proud Monster". The piece was adapted by Dr. G Balfantz, chair of the English & Communications department and head of the drama program, from the novel by Ian McMillan. The work consists of 7 short stories (out of an original 70) from the novel that each represented a part of life in Eastern Europe during World War II. All of the skits are in narrative form.

Most of the miniatures are disturbing to say the least; one short performance involves a Polish woman in a concentration camp giving birth only to have her baby taken away and drowned. In another, the audience watches a starving girl play with her dolls as she resorts to eating paint chips. The audience witnesses first hand the concentration camps from both the gruesome experiences of the prisoners and the perspectives of the soldiers and guards. The piece created in a mingled sense of disgust, pity, remorse, and terror in all of us that is necessary to even partially understand the horrors of World War II.

The company has been practicing since before semester break and has worked feverishly to perfect their piece. The members of "Proud Monster" are Emily Boduch, Gabrielle Castillo, Jared Little, Sarah Prall, Steve Uger, and Justin Wright. The performance came off beautifully and delivered a powerful message. The cast should be proud and celebrate their success.

Balfantz created the piece for this year's Performance Studies Festival held on Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus. The theme was "Oppression and Release". The group left Thursday February, 14, at noon in hopes of visiting the Holocaust Museum in Farmington Hills on Friday with the rest of the festival's participants. They will also speak with a Holocaust survivor and have the chance to attend performance workshops.

The Performance Studies Festival is an annual festival hosted by Oakland Community College and Eastern Michigan University. The festival's goal is to create a deeper appreciation of performance and writing on a certain topic or theme. The event gives students an opportunity to perform their own pieces and improve their abilities.

If you're interested in Black Box Theatre, several of the same players will be performing "The Diviners", a comedy about southern religious zealots at the end of this month. Watch for posters and web announcements.