

Last play this year runs with success

BY FRANKLIN K.R. CLINE
Reviewer

The theatre department's last main-stage show of the school year, "See How They Run," is an amusing albeit forgettable farce. It's well-acted and directed, as is typically the case with Truman theatre productions, and although the script suffers from some minor failures, it ultimately provides a great deal of laughs. This is in no small part due to a cast carefully prepared for both physical and verbal comedy by director Ron Rybkowski.

"See How They Run" is a funny, convoluted tale that follows a typical farcical arc which relies upon characters' misunderstandings and cover-ups and includes a maid, a bishop and one real and two fake vicars — nobody on stage ever has the full picture, almost all the characters are out for their own good and many jokes are derived from the ubiquitous confusion. Seniors Jared Latore, as the Bishop of Lax, and Courtney Schaefer, as Ida (the maid), stand out especially — Ida as a world-weary prole who comes

the closest to being aware of the whole situation, and the Bishop as the confused old man who is thrust into a cavalcade of liars and false personalities. I don't want to give much of the plot away. Ultimately, it's the story of a vicar and his wife, an escaped Russian, his wife's former co-star in an old play, their maid, an uptight woman who is in love

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with the vicar and ... this won't work. The story's not nearly as convoluted to follow as it is to describe, but trust that it provides a good deal of genuine comedy.

That's not to say the show is perfect, of course. There is a bit too much reliance on cheap sex jokes, but hey, it sells.

Those provided some of the biggest laughs of the night, so I can't fault Rybkowski for playing them up. Also, the show takes awhile to get moving. The first act really crawls during the beginning but soon livens up, and Act II takes place at a breakneck speed. In the show's favor, the final lines of each act are especially hilarious, in particular the final one of the play, which lends itself to a goofy spiral that



"See How They Run," directed by professor of theatre Ron Rybkowski, will be the last main-stage performance of the year. The comedy gives a thrill primarily because of the actors, rather than the stage effects. Play runs until April 19.

could only be possible in a farcical world.

The emphasis of this play is solely on the actors — there are no cute technical tricks here like the video screens or things hung from the ceiling that are

occasionally featured in theater productions. In fact, with the exception of some beautiful lighting to begin Act II, the stage is fully illuminated for the entire show. A play like "See How They Run" depends on its

actors and director to deliver the material to the audience in a very old-fashioned manner, and in that respect they were certainly successful. I recommend seeing this play, as it is akin to those wacky fire dancers the Student

Activities Board offered us a few nights back: It's a welcome, if mostly mindless, chance to remove oneself from the harrowing stress of mid-April collegiate obligations. And if that's not art, then what is?

24-hour diner hits the spot

BY DYLAN HERX
Reviewer

In a dingy, brown building that looks ironically like a converted Waffle House resides Pancake City. My imagination wants to actually envision a metropolitan community where pancakes live and work. Instead, I'll take the opportunity to say in patriotic fashion: God bless pancakes — the fluffy, golden-brown delights that have cheered up sleepy kids and provided reason for impromptu late-night friendships for ages.

That's right, folks — maybe your parents told you that pancakes were only for breakfast, but maybe your parents never had brinner (the avant-garde concept of breakfast for dinner). Heck, at Pancake City, customers can eat pancakes any time because it is open 24 hours a day. PC, as it is sometimes known, even has a MySpace page, something that I'm pretty sure most restaurants in town cannot boast. Before I sound like some sort of Pancake City-worshipping zombie, I'll admit that until last week I'd only been to PC once, accompanied by my parents as a wee Truman freshman. It's a shame, though, that I didn't give Pancake City more of my time — at the very least more of my time after midnight.

The ability to dine at a restaurant in both the early hours of the morning and the dining times of normal adults provides a vast contrast. After midnight, you are unlikely to see a customer over the age of 30 unless he or she is an employee or an over-the-road driver. The late-night atmosphere also facilitates large groups of questionably sober (or at least of questionable sober judgment) individuals. Regardless, at



Angela Nelson with her children Justice and Destiny enjoy dinner at Pancake City on Monday evening.

Pancake City, great conversations just happen. They might not be great in terms of scholastic or altruistic merit, but they are great in their ability to make you laugh until you fall out of the booth or perhaps simply have a hearty guffaw.

Other than that, Pancake City on first impression is nothing remarkable. The tables are covered in ads from sponsors, inspirational pictures litter the walls and everything tends to blend with the brown, with the exception of the phosphorescent glow from the gaming area by the register. Pancake City gets one biased bonus point for having a quarter game that holds a dear place in my heart. The staff of PC is friendly enough, especially considering the droves of people who flock in at all hours. When I went Sunday, I could barely get a table, and that's saying quite a bit considering the ample seating.

With a tenderloin sandwich called The Killer and a chili-loaded half-pounder known as the Garbage Burger, Pancake

City probably isn't concerned about being the healthiest place in the 'Ville. The portions are huge, although I will say that the "H U G E" tenderloin (as denoted on the menu) is not the largest, nor best I've had. That title belongs to Kemna's Dinner Bell in Jefferson City. It still was as big as my face, though, so who's counting? One thing I appreciate about PC is the ability to get hashbrowns with my meal instead of fries. More restaurants should adopt the little-brother-of-the-french-fry standby. Pancakes, naturally, are served by the platoon at PC. There are classic varieties like blueberry, apple cinnamon and strawberry (complete with whipped cream) and rich, new-age peanut butter cup and chocolate chip varieties.

Pancake City excels at its namesake, but Northtown Café offers stiff competition. It really comes down to atmosphere, and PC does get the nod for being open continuously. Either way, breakfasts in Kirksville are safe from the evils of wasted money. And if, like me, you're a fan of breakfast, brunch and brinner, then Pancake City is a great place to kick back with friends.

Concert's atmosphere wins hippies' hearts

BY PHILIP SCHAEFER
for the Index

The dank bar reeked of patchouli and emptiness an hour after the opening band was supposed to start. There were 14 people downing PBR pints in Columbia's favorite Jamaican-themed venue, Mojo's. I counted.

Bob Marley's flag hung over the heads of the hippies, who were handing out National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws tracts by the front door, dreadlocks hiding their faces. The \$5 show was worth it already, good music or bad.

When the Oklahoma band Sugar Free All Stars hit the stage around 10 to open the night, another 25 people or so wafted in, cigarettes adorning their ears like pencils. The band consisted of two guys: a bald keyboardist and a drummer. The keys were programmed to sound like the seventh-inning stretch organ on steroids.

The band's New Orleans funk somehow blended nicely with its self-proclaimed Black Sabbath influence. The keyboardist and lead singer, Chris Wiser, had a voice and style that epitomized Letterman's band leader, Paul Shaffer. The Sugar Free All Stars played about eight songs to a crowd getting drunker through each chorus. "Blame It on the Monkey" was a crowd favorite as the lyric "with chili dogs and alcohol" washed down everyone's throats over and over again. By the end of the set, Wiser had one hand on the keys, one cradling the tenor sax — it was a deafening sound, yet somehow gratifying.

While Madahoochi was setting up, another 30 or so hippies trickled in with weed riding their coattails. We sat in the back, scooped in between some

groupies who were pouring more Captain Morgan into their rum and Cokes. A man resembling Milton (the stapler guy) from the movie "Office Space" leaned over and asked, "How do you know a hippie's been staying on your couch?"

"Got me," I responded. "He's still there."

Clearly, the night had just begun. A 60-year-old bald gypsy woman whom the crowd called Grandma was dancing by herself in the back, castanets clapping from her hands. She wore a rainbow-striped gown with kneepads and a glowing smile, blissfully unaware of what decade it was or what town she was in. Bubbles spilled out over the crowd, bathing everyone in suds as they popped. Finally Madahoochi broke the spell and strummed the first chord.

The Riverside St. Louisans are best known for their spontaneous jam sessions, which bleed out of every tune and instrument. Scott Rockwood, the lead singer, also played the electric guitar, while the drummer and keyboardist added backup vocals. They started out with "Real Time," a bump-n-jump ditty to get the sweat pouring. With a voice that resembles the frontman of Dispatch after 40 years of smoking, Rockwood's heaviest influence is unmistakably Sublime. The fourth song, "The Spider that Betrayed the Fly," echoes the quintessential Sublime mantra — that quirky juxtaposition of morose lyrics with rock-and-roll ear candy.

Two beers or four songs later, Madahoochi satisfied the drooling crowd's palate with

"Nuclear Man." This short-lyric tune really drew out the band's musical abilities, as each member soloed for a solid five minutes. The crowd sang along because class participation was required, everyone bobbing their heads and flailing their limbs like drunken mimes. When the jam ended, Rockwood asked how we were feeling. A girl in the front yelled, "Vertigo!" as she spun in circles before collapsing into her boyfriend's arms.

The band ended the show at about 1 a.m. with two hit covers: "Feel Like Makin' Love" and "Billie Jean." Wiser was invited back on stage to play the sax, leaving the bartenders no choice but to join in the dancing. For the last 20 minutes it was sheer footloose madness. Hands on thighs, thighs on walls, voices to the ceiling. When it all ended, everyone walked outside for a much needed cool-off. The groupies had started smoking again, still singing their tone-deaf hearts out to the Bad Company cover. Tact was irrelevant.

Madahoochi had given its students a lecture worth remembering — even if the music was partially muffled by the small-time bar and mediocre sound system. It escalated the level of energy that had been flickering before the show but perhaps was a bit shy in comparison to other performances. When asked about his response to the show, senior John Redden replied, "It was alright. Kind of tame, really." Apparently having to peel one's jacket off his skin from sweat qualifies as a sub-par experience. Better head to St. Louis when it's not an off-night.

"How do you know a hippie's been staying on your couch? ... He's still here."

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