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“Jekyll and Hyde The Musical” features numerous cast members with unconventional majors who bring strengths to their roles and performances.

Musical performers share Jekyll and Hyde traits

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All people have an opposing force within them, and this describes numerous cast members in the musical “Jekyll and Hyde.”

The curtain will go up April 15 for the musical “Jekyll and Hyde” in the John G. Severns Theater. It features a character with split personalities, and although the cast members are not secretly villains in their spare time, they are unconventional types of actors.

The play explores the duality of human beings and features a dark and grotesque version of the London backdrop. Despite the gloomy nature of the musical, numerous cast members present a similar figure as Jekyll and Hyde. Although the cast members are not all innocent doctors transforming into murderous villains, they do have another side to their roles.

Junior Jamie Menown will be playing the character of Emma Carew, the fiancée of Dr. Jekyll. Carew is a lady of high society who rebels against societal standards and marries Jekyll, who is slightly lower in class. Like the personality of “Jekyll and Hyde,” Menown offers an opposing force within her character and her life as a Truman student.

During the day, Menown is a nursing major who does clinical work at the hospital, but at night, she transforms into a young woman in London in 1885.

“I have had to step out of my comfort zone, and I think that’s that

cool thing about this show,” Menown said. “Everybody has to do to something they are really unfamiliar with and just not used to. Just learning how to be comfortable onstage, just singing to the audience and not anyone in particular.”

The musical “Jekyll and Hyde” will be Menown’s first production since high school. She said her love of the play inspired her to audition for a role.

“I have always been kind of intimidated by the theater department because I always thought their productions were really professional, and everyone seems really talented,” Menown said. “I felt really out of my league.”

Menown said she thinks she has dumb moments sometimes in rehearsal because she is not a theater major, but said she brings her own techniques to the production. Menown has created her own story for the role and has brought her own strengths to the musical.

“It could be a boring role, but I am trying to take it outside of the bare minimum,” Menown said. “I am just trying to bring out the strength of the character and kind of rebelling against societal norms rather than just be the trophy wife that she is supposed to be because that’s not what she is interested in. She is marrying for love rather than a place in society, which is really different for the time.”

Sophomore chorus member and English major, Alex Otis, will be playing poor people and prostitutes. Like Menown, Otis has not previously been a part of Truman’s

theater department, and “Jekyll and Hyde” will be her first college production. Otis said the music in rehearsal helps her transform from a student to a ghoulish character stalking the dark alleyways of London. “I mean the music really helps,” Otis said.

“It gets you riled up and feisty. I think a big part of it is feeding off of other people’s energy when you are up onstage.”

Ronald Rybkowski, professor of theater and director of “Jekyll and Hyde,” offered numerous insights to the casting process. He said he thinks each person brings freshness to the theater department and the production.

“Sometimes people come to the audition because this is something they are passionate about in high school, and it was fun,” Rybkowski said. “But now they are being really more realistic and saying, ‘I need to find a job and a career, and I know theater is not for me. But I still love to do it.’ So I think it’s great for us to be able to have an opportunity to perform even though that’s not their lifelong dream.”

Rybkowski said each actor, despite their background or major, can contribute something into the performance.

“Every person in the cast is bringing something special of themselves to this play,” Rybkowski said. “I mean that’s acting, acting is something inside of you to be able to portray it, and either you have experienced, or you have seen it someplace but somehow it is in you, and now it’s coming out.”

Cooking with Julia: SALMON WITH DILL SAUCE



Julia Hansen

When I was little I used to love getting up Easter morning, hurrying around our yard, finding Easter eggs, then sorting and sharing the candy the Easter Bunny had left for my sister and me. I don’t remember when the Easter Bunny (my dad) stopped coming to visit, but I think I have gotten past the stage where I thought it was embarrassing and childish to go on an Easter egg hunt. I want the Easter Bunny to come back for a visit! What a fool I was these last few years thinking that going on an outdoor scavenger hunt for massive amounts of candy was uncool.

Most years after church, my family would go over to my uncle and aunt’s house where we would eat the

traditional ham, green beans, potatoes, scalloped corn, deviled eggs and rolls. This meal always has been a favorite of mine, perhaps because it only happens once a year and because cooked ham is salty and delicious.

My question then is: What if you don’t want ham? What if you are tired of the traditional Easter meal, you are a vegetarian or you don’t celebrate Easter? Change it up! Tradition is nice, but being unconventional can be nice as well.

How about ... salmon? I have always wanted to feature a salmon recipe in my column, but never have in more than a year of writing. Salmon is a great fish because it is high in protein and low in saturated fats. It also has omega 3-fatty acids which are good for your heart, hair and overall health. It is easier to cook than you might think, and I bought some frozen salmon on sale for \$4 per pound, which definitely is reasonable.

My mom used to make this recipe at home and I loved the combination of salmon with a dill sauce. She would always cook white rice on the side, and I would put the dill sauce on the rice as well as the salmon. Served with a salad and toasted French bread, you might decide this meal is good enough to do away with the old ham and potatoes tradition for your big Easter dinner.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. salmon, split up into 4 oz. fillets
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 5 tablespoons flour
- 3 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons dill, fresh or dried
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Place fillets on slightly oiled baking pan. Bake salmon in a 350 degree oven for eight to 15 minutes, until fish flakes apart easily. The time will vary depending on the thickness of the filets.
2. While salmon is in the oven, cook the dill sauce. Heat olive oil over medium-high heat for about 30 seconds to one minute. Add flour all at once stirring quickly and constantly. Continue stirring for two minutes, then add milk, stirring constantly until mixture thickens. This usually takes several minutes. Add dill, salt and pepper and turn temperature down to low until salmon fillets are done. Serve with white rice.

