



"Broken Bride" cast members take their bow at the end of the production. Freshmen were the majority of the cast. *Jessie Poole/index*

## Young talent shines despite poor direction

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When the lights went down at the end of the staged production of Ludo's "Broken Bride" album performed last Friday and Saturday in Baldwin Auditorium, it wasn't awe that had the audience silent.

"Broken Bride," released in 2005, is a rock opera concept album that tells the story of a scientist and his quest to reunite with his recently deceased wife. After his wife's death in 1989, the scientist builds a time machine in an attempt to go back to save her. Unfortunately, he overshoots his mark and visits the Jurassic era, and then the future where the apocalypse has come and zombies have taken control of the world. The album first was produced on stage at the University of Chicago in 2006.

Director senior Roxxy Leiser's production remained true to the band's story line, but lacked in quality and presentation. The 35-minute musical one act had a few strengths, but they were overshadowed by its weaknesses. The student-written script between songs was nearly non-existent and lyrics were inaudible because sound issues led to confusion as scenes quickly changed and random characters appeared on stage.

The audience remained silent throughout and after the performance ended, seeming to not know how to react or when they should clap. The final scene was held back primarily by its abruptness and lack of clarity, a shame considering it was one of the stronger scenes

of the show as junior Brendan Gregg and senior Casey Scoggins brought a brief moment of depth to the production.

The production consisted of a mostly freshman cast, and seemed to serve as a "freshman showcase." Ranging from supporting roles to chorus members, the freshmen in the production held their own for the most part.

Perhaps the production's greatest benefit was the introduction of freshmen Chris Wacker and Nathan Eastin to the Truman theater department. Between strong vocals and equally strong acting, Wacker, who played a boy hoping to save his family from zombies, easily was the strongest performer of the night. Wacker alone managed to give the production humor. Eastin, playing the narrator, also provided strong vocals and a prominent stage presence. He held the disjointed plot together well, an admirable feat.

Gregg, Scoggins and freshman Lauren Kellett also contributed strong features to the production. Although the range and tempos of the pieces caused him difficulty, Gregg, playing the scientist, kept up. Kellett, sporting an impressive limp, did well as the zombie soldier and performed a strong female vocal solo. Scoggins, a Truman theater veteran, played the broken bride to the best of her ability. As one of the strongest

performers in the production, it was a disappointment that she rarely was on stage and sang only briefly.

Strong performers could not make up for the downfalls caused by a lack of resources and weak technical aspects.

The sound was the weakest component of the production. Several performers could not keep up with the MP3s used as instrumentation for the production. Actors were overpowered by the music throughout the show, and a lack of proper microphones caused many of the lyrics to be inaudible.

The performance space worked against the production as well. Although the 1,400 seat auditorium is great for golden acrobats and orchestras, the large space gave poor acoustics to a show that would have been better suited for a smaller theater.

Lighting by theater professor Ronnie Rybkowski was strong despite several dark spots and inaccurate spotlight work. The use of colored gels and several lighting techniques set the tone well and cleverly silhouetted and highlighted several scenes.

Overall, the execution of the production is what led to its failure. It might not have reached the caliber of other Truman theater productions, but the production did serve one purpose and have one benefit: introducing freshmen.

▮ The audience remained silent throughout and after the performance ended, seeming to not know how to react or when they should clap. ▮

## Pitt shines in so-so sports flick



BY KEN DUSOLD  
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"It's hard not to be romantic about baseball," Billy Beane says during the closing scenes of "Moneyball." In America, this is a difficult statement with which to argue. Ironically — and despite Beane's comment — the filmmakers of this new feature about the national pastime try arguing with that statement by extracting as much romanticism as possible.

To be fair, "Moneyball" is a solid film. Directed by Academy Award nominee Bennett Miller (for "Capote") and boasting witty dialogue by Academy Award winners Steve Zaillian ("Schindler's List") and Aaron Sorkin ("The Social Network"), the film moves smoothly through a delightfully interesting story set during the Oakland Athletics' 2002 season. However, it fails to capture the true spirit of the game.

"Moneyball" does not focus its attention on the games or players so much as on the team's general manager, Billy Beane (Brad Pitt), as he attempts to build a competitive ball club with the smallest

bank account of any franchise in the league. Beane also hopes to revolutionize the sport itself, which has become a game of high rollers including New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner and Boston Red Sox owner John Henry who try feverishly to out-spend one another.

This criticism of baseball's faults is an important issue and one worth any diehard fan's concern. Again though, "Moneyball" does not spend two hours extolling the virtues of the tradition and sportsmanship of the past. Rather, it chastises the old system for not stopping the myriad of million-dollar salaries and greedy owners and spends much of the running time praising Beane's genius.

To successfully achieve his goals, Beane turns to sabermetrics, using of empirical evidence and advanced mathematical formulas to provide managers and team administrators with the scientific facts necessary to figure what a player actually is worth on the field. In essence, it's the use of science to form strategy rather than experience and old-fashioned baseball know-how.

Only second to his performance previously this year in "Tree of Life," Pitt is terrific as Beane. He has the heart, determination and spunk of a great sports film character. He properly balances calmness with restlessness and quiet support with loud rage. Jonah Hill, who plays Beane's assistant and the actual mind behind the use of sabermetrics in Oakland, is incredibly enjoyable to watch. Invoking the spirit of



Billy Beane (Brad Pitt) sits in the stands at the home of the Oakland Athletics's, The Coliseum, in the 2011 sports film "Moneyball." *Photo courtesy of rottentomatoes.com*

most Sorkin scripts, Hill is humorous without being funny, brainy without being pretentious and soft-spoken without being quiet.

Beyond the acting, the film's flow is interrupted in two ways. There is an occasional melodramatic flashback to explain Beane's failed career as a baseball player and thus, his problem with the game's present operating system. These flashbacks are at times presented in dream-like sequences and at others times, they are full scenes. In addition to the flashbacks, the film is distracted by its being unsure of its own goal.

As already inferred, if "Moneyball"'s purpose was to

paint the portrait of one man's efforts to change the broken, but stubborn status quo, it could be a film on par with Sorkin's "The Social Network" ... even if Beane wasn't successful in the end. However, the film includes a montage of the Athletics' record-setting 20-game winning streak that season, culminating in the nail-biting 20th game. This section of the film evokes the passion and thrill of the sport as seen in films like "The Natural" and "61," but also diverts attention away from the perceived focus.

Trying to be a "different" kind of baseball film, "Moneyball" falters

during its second half as it conforms itself into a generic baseball movie. The filmmakers sneak sentimentalism into the final innings of the film, despite having just argued — pretty effectively — that the traditional way of letting human passion drive the game should be replaced with a facts-based approach. Because of this contradiction, it fails to measure up with the best sports films.

Separated from the genre somewhat, "Moneyball" still is entertaining and worth viewing. The performances are outstanding, the pace is appropriate and the story is one that needed to be told. If it hadn't fought so hard to be romantic, it could be great.

## Time is wasting



Time and priority management are key to a successful and rewarding life

BY KATHLEEN BARBOSA  
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It's about time.

Classes have been in full swing for more than a month, so it is time for us to get our acts together. We need to start using the resources we have wisely. I'm talking about recycling or conserving gas. I'm talking about the most precious, irreplaceable and valuable resource we have — time.

Just the other day, I was talking to a friend about how we have days full of extracurricular events, social activities and sleep, and we squeeze in an hour or two for class instead of the other way around. It's time for everyone, including myself, to get over adjusting to being back at school and plan our schedules.

Aside from small changes, each week's schedule is relatively the same for most students. This should allow us to develop a manageable pattern, not just one that we can survive through. For example, if your idea of getting through the week includes any night where you have fewer than four hours of sleep, eat only something from a convenience store as a meal or wear the same outfit more than two days in a row because you don't have time to change, you might have some time-management issues.

I'm not saying we occasionally don't have the ridiculously stressful or busy week, but in general, you shouldn't be fighting to keep your head above the proverbial water of your day. It comes down to managing your commitments and evaluating your priorities.

We are Truman State students, but we aren't superhuman, despite what we might like to think. The urge to compete, earn better grades, be president of more clubs and win more awards can drive us to overextend ourselves. We all have the same 24 hours in each day, but how would you rather use it: doing a few things very well, or participating in a dozen clubs and activities halfheartedly?

Aside from commitments, we often become distracted by unimportant things and push our commitments aside. Realistically, how long did you spend trying to figure out the new Facebook or watching the premiere of Grey's Anatomy and what should you have been working on instead? There is no reason to complain about not having enough time to get everything done if you are not prioritizing.

Let's face it, you don't have to check Twitter, meet friends for dinner or go out every weekend. Friday night can be homework night. You can have a group meeting Saturday morning. Making those choices might not be the most fun, but they occasionally are necessary.

As time shrinks, and your to-do list grows, it is time to wake up and start acting responsible. Mom can't tell you when curfew is, Dad won't pick you up from your play dates — its up to you to manage your day. It's time to get your schedule within control. There is no reason to damage your grades, health or social well-being by driving yourself crazy with a schedule that does more harm than good.