

The Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company presents 'As You Like It'

One of Shakespeare's lesser-known comedies is performed by a student group

By MARIA SMITH
Scene Editor

It would be unfair to say a Shakespearean play, which is performed less frequently than its companions, does not deserve more attention. The collection of Shakespearean works contains many fascinating stories and characters that are largely overlooked in performances and literature classes.



KC KENNEY/The Observer

"As You Like It" is a typical Shakespearean comedy of mistaken identities mixed in with the intertwined lives of all the characters.

Among the Shakespearean plays, "As You Like It" probably falls around the middle of the spectrum for how well it is known and how often it is performed. This is probably exactly where it should be. The play has some memorable pieces, but as an entire work, it is not as compelling as the more popular comedies.

The plot of the play is not as well known or as distinctive as some. When the usurper Duke Ferdinand banishes his niece Rosalind from his court, she flees to woods where her banished father, Duke Senior, also lives in hiding, disguised as a boy. She takes the name of Ganymede. Her cousin Celia, the Duke's daughter and Rosalind's close friend, flees with her and adopts the role of Ganymede's sister under the name of Aliena. The court jester, Touchstone, accompanies them to the woods. However, before fleeing to the woods, Rosalind had fallen in love with Orlando, the younger son of the recently deceased Sir Rowland de Bois, a close friend of Duke Senior. Orlando, whose older brother Oliver refuses to grant him his inheritance or birthright, has also retreated to the woods. He begins tacking poorly composed but utterly sincere love poetry to Rosalind on the forest trees, where his lover and her friend eventually encounter and read his verses. Rosalind, still in disguise, begins to act in the role of matchmaker for her love and the other people she encounters in the woods.

The scene in which Jaques utters the line, "All the world's a stage, and all



KC KENNEY/The Observer

As is the case with most comedies, the play ends happily, with love realized for most of the characters.

the men and women merely players" may be the one every audience member will recognize. The lord who is inclined to melancholy and unable to participate in

As You Like It



A comedy by William Shakespeare

Director: Meghann Tabor

Starring: Elizabeth Grams, Justin Smith, Sarah Loveland, Marty Schroeder, Jeff Eyeran, April Flores, Kevin McCarthy, Ian Novick and Tom Sutton

Stage Manager: AnaMarie Ortiz

the frolicking of the other men and women in the forest may not have achieved fame as a character, but is distinguished by the line which has perhaps come to characterize Shakespeare better than any other.

Rosalind is also remembered as one of Shakespeare's wittier and more graceful heroine. In the guise of Ganymede she instructs her lover and the other men and women around her in the ways of love. Unlike Jaques who can observe love but not participate, she falls for its folly in her own right and proves herself neither a hopeless fool nor a staunch critic.

"As You Like It" is not the best performance the company has ever put on, but does not lack its merits. The cast sometimes gets tripped up with the meaning of the language, and since the play is not one with which most students are familiar, it is more difficult to follow the development of the plot and figure out exactly who all the characters are. Several scenes seemed as though the cast had rushed



KC KENNEY/The Observer

The two central female friends, Rosalind, left, and her cousin Celia, help each other through the confusion of love and fighting family in "As You Like It."



KC KENNEY/The Observer

Much of "As You Like It" focuses on the trials of love that is not immediately returned, but eventually gained.

through them without really examining their deeper import, and the characters were not as distinct as they might have been. Several of the wittier dialogues of the play also seem rushed.

Rosalind is the saving grace of the play, which is perhaps as it was intended to be. Elizabeth Grams seems more constrained in the clothes of a woman than the guise of a man, emphasizing the freedom that seems to come with donning the clothes, not just of another person, but of another gender. Rosalind may charm Orlando in skirts, but she charms everyone, including the audience, in pants, hat and a jacket. Even Orlando seems to enjoy the process of learning to woo with the aid of the playful youth. Even the dialogue between Celia and Rosalind

seems to carry hints of a lovers' sentiment. Critics have raised the question of homoeroticism in a play where love and gender bending are so loosely mixed, and Graham's performance brings the theme out subtly but not imperceptibly.

If you are particularly fond of Shakespeare you might want to take advantage of this chance to add to the list of plays with which you are familiar. If you want to see Not So Royal in its true luster, it would be better to wait for another performance. Or you can disregard the opinions of a critic and watch the adventure of another set of Shakespearean characters yourself — just as you like it.

Contact Maria Smith at msmith@nd.edu



KC KENNEY/The Observer

With a large cast of characters, "As You Like It" stays interesting and involved throughout the play, keeping the stage engaged in action.

Christmas Cookies for the holidays

*Don't wait for Mom's Christmas cookies,
make some of your own*

By MAUREEN MALLOY
Scene Writer

In my opinion, one of the best holiday traditions is baking Christmas cookies. This activity leads to my absolute favorite activity — eating Christmas cookies. If you're anything like me and can't wait to get home to indulge in your Mom's gingerbread or snickerdoodles, organize a simple cookie exchange party. Invite your friends (preferably ones who aren't hopeless in the kitchen since you're going to be eating what they baked!) to each bring a batch of their favorite cookies and the recipe for swapping at the party. With some Christmas music playing the background, have each baker tell a little about their recipe before digging into the cookies. Also make sure to have plenty of hot cocoa, tea or coffee to wash down all treats. Try to resist from eating all the cookies, and that way each party attendee gets to take home a variety of holiday treats that will be something to hold on to during finals. If you don't have any Christmas cookie recipes, or are looking for a new favorite, try some of these yummy goodies.

Coconut Oatmeal Cookies

1 1/4 cups butter, softened
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup white sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 1/2 cups rolled oats
3/4 cup flaked coconut
1 cup white chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). In a medium bowl, cream together butter, brown sugar and white sugar. Mix in the egg and vanilla. Combine flour and baking soda; blend into creamed mixture. Stir in the rolled oats, coconut and white chocolate chips. Drop dough by rounded tablespoons onto un-greased cookie sheets. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes in preheated oven, or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks.

Recipe courtesy of Claire Kalpakjian, Copyright © 2004; www.allrecipes.com. All Rights Reserved

Devil's Food Cookies

1 box (18 1/4 ounces) devil's food cake mix
2 eggs
1/4 cup hot coffee or hot water
1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup semisweet chocolate pieces
1 cup chopped pecans
3/4 cup bits of chocolate-toffee candy
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Combine cake mix, eggs, coffee, oil and flour in large bowl. Beat on low speed until all ingredients are moistened; then beat on high speed for 2 minutes.

Dough will be sticky. Fold in chocolate pieces, pecans and candy until evenly distributed. Using about half of the batter, drop by heaping tablespoonfuls onto un-greased baking sheet, spacing 2 inches apart. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet on a wire rack for 4 to 5 minutes or until firm. With a metal spatula, transfer the cookies to the wire rack to cool. Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve slightly warm or store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Recipe courtesy of Family Circle. Copyright © 2004 Television Food Network, G.P., All Rights Reserved

Peppermint Hot Chocolate

1 1/2 cups heavy cream
1 1/2 cups milk
1/4 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
3 drops peppermint oil
Sweetened whipped cream, for garnish
Chocolate shavings, for garnish

In a saucepan, combine the cream, milk, sugar and salt. Heat over medium-low heat. When the cream mixture just begins to steam, add the chopped chocolate and stir until melted. Stir in the peppermint oil. Divide the hot chocolate among mugs and top with whipped cream and chocolate shavings.

Recipe courtesy of Jackie Riley. Copyright © 2004 Television Food Network, G.P., All Rights Reserved

Contact Maureen Malloy at mmalloy1@nd.edu