

Student Director's Passion Turned To Reality

What a person can do, a person should do.
by Rachel Kuhnle

What is there to say about the Concordia Drama Department's student production of *Antigone*? If *Antigone* were as simple and tangible as the play program I currently hold in my hand,

mind and I feel this play more than I can write about it. And my head still hurts from crying.

The Concordia St. Paul *Antigone* experience began when a young Kate Wulf, a sophomore from Pequot Lakes Senior High School, first read Jean Anouilh's version of the Greek tragedy. "I loved it from the first read, even if I didn't quite appreciate the depth of it

time, she still says, "Every time I read it, I love it even more."

The play was a great vehicle for the student actors as well as the production crew with many different opportunities to shine. Senior LaTwanna Rudolph designed the set, while seemingly simple, I could not have imagined any other way. Senior Nathan Burrows lighting design was very effective. Kudos to all involved with the crew. There were so many strong performances, but that's one thing the script demands: strength. And that's what Kate expected from her cast. Sophomore MaryLynn offers, "Even when we nailed it, we always wanted to dive in deeper and rise beyond ourselves to share this powerful story."

Katie Johnson's performance as Ismene showed real talent and was an impressive leap from the fun, silly Essie she played in *You Can't Take it With You* last fall. Jameson Baxter did a great job as Jonas,

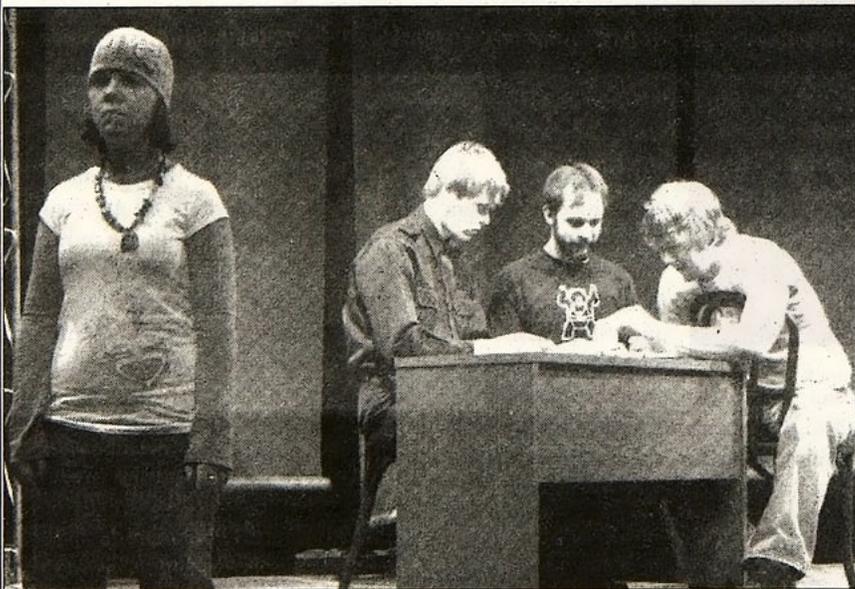
stole the show (appropriately.) Huber beautifully portrayed Creon with more depth than a lesser actor may have achieved and MaryLynn's portrayal of Antigone, a girl living out her last day on earth, giving up her life so that her brother may have a proper burial, impressed me the most.

Talent is nothing without direction, however, and Kate Wulf's directing premier was a wild success. The best and the worst in all the characters come out in the play, and Wulf made clear in her direction. Huber felt Wulf helped him to grow as an actor and a person. "She never told you 'Do it like this...'" but rather 'How did you feel about the way that monologue went' or 'Why did you do it that way?' I never thought I could take on a role such as Creon, but she believed in me and worked with me."

In conclusion, the performance was poignant for so many reasons. For Wulf, it was bringing her favorite play to life. For the Drama Department faculty, and particularly Randy Winker, Wulf's directing mentor, I imagine it was wonderful to see his little "ducklings" swim on their own. The audience members also take a

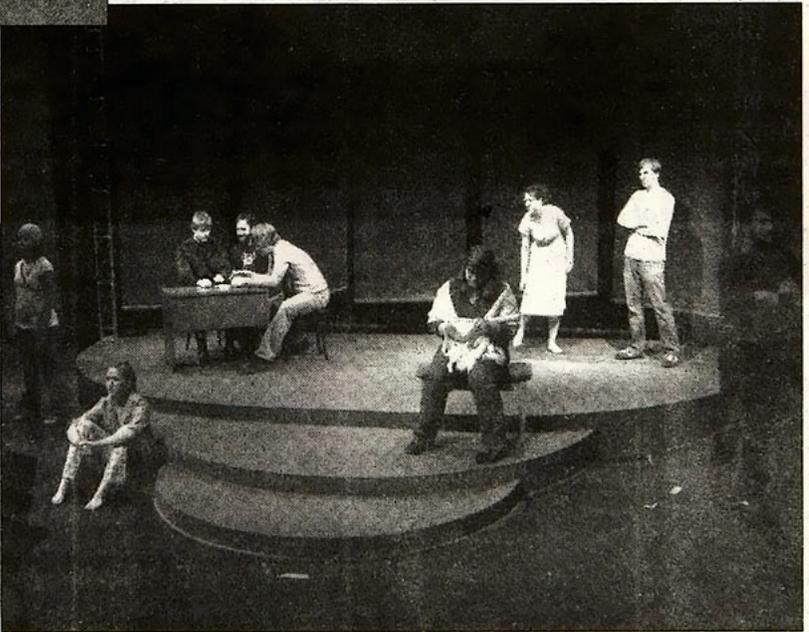


Above: MaryLynn Mennicke and Tim Sailer embrace during rehearsal.
Right: The whole cast in position while rehearsing for opening night.
Below: Kait Craig, Jameson Baxter, ???, ??? during dress rehearsal
photos by Stephanie Olson



I would merely place on it a great, glittery praise sticker reading, *Fantastic!* or *Awww-some!* or *Super-duper Job!* Smiley faces galore, (unfortunately, you never see stickers with praise like Triumphant portrayal of a timeless struggle!) Back in the cerebral world of the intangible, the *Antigone* experience still very much occupies my

then. In the six years since then, I've gained a much better understanding of the play." So in the fall of 2005, for the directing class one-act competition, Wulf directed a condensed version of the tragedy. She was one of two directors to win the competition, the other being Brenna Deegan, whose show played last spring. Wulf had over a year to cut and re-cut. After so much



the "last human face" Antigone sees. Baxter effectively played up the guard's awkwardness and habit of rambling when faced with the gravity of life. Junior Josiah Laubenstein was great as the all knowing Greek chorus, and freshman Kait Craig, as the messenger, performed a beautiful monologue recounting the deaths of Antigone and Haemon. Joshua Pehl and Matt Morgan were great as the unfeeling guards, and Tim Sailer was great as the tragic, weak character of Haemon. But sincerely, Josh Huber as Creon and MaryLynn Mennicke as Antigone

lot out of this play. So much is said about the play from the little information offered in the program—Setting: Everywhere. Time: Always. The story of *Antigone* is one of strength, idealism, religious sanctity, family...I could go on. These are all themes found behind every passionate act of rebellion and so many important success stories. *Antigone* may be a tragedy, but because Antigone dies, we may live a more aware life.