

Theatre freshmen put on original performance during Freshman Showcase

By Cayden Royce | Published 16 hours ago



By Danyelle Morrow / The State News

Theatre freshman Megan Cochrane watches fellow cast members interact during a performance of "Off With Her Head," on Nov. 10, 2013, at the Auditorium. The performance was the seventh-annual freshman showcase put on by the Department of Theatre. Danyelle Morrow/The State News

The Department of Theatre housed its seventh annual Freshman Showcase this weekend with several showings of "Off With Her Head," a play inspired by the classic children's tale "Alice in Wonderland."

The cast, consisting of 17 freshmen along with a production team, collaborated to devise a storyline, create a set and present an hour-long performance to introduce themselves to the faculty and staff of the MSU Department of Theatre.

"We started without a script or anything like that — We just had 'Alice in Wonderland,'" said media and information freshman Joel

Dejong, who worked sound and acted in the show. "We wanted to kind of figure out how we were going to tell the story, and what story we were going to tell."

The show included a conflict with the Queen of Heart's abusive husband, who takes her baby, Alison. This incident caused her to go mad and invent an escape from reality, the delusion of "wonderland." She receives a glimpse of hope upon receiving a letter from Alison, which inspires her to rid herself of her imagined world.

Because freshmen traditionally aren't able to audition for the main stage shows during their first semester, the showcase provides an expressive outlet for eager budding actors, actresses and production members.

"Personally, I think for all of us it has just been such an experience," human biology and theatre freshman Jennifer English said. "I know a lot of us have never worked in a (360-degree theater) before, so just the experience of being on this type of stage (was beneficial)."

For English, who portrayed the lead character, the show wasn't just about coming up with an intriguing story to tell.

"I'm most excited about leaving this Freshman Showcase legacy," English said.

The crew's final performance was on Sunday, which stage manager for the show and theatre freshman Emily Blaquiere had mixed feelings about.

"We're just excited to close the show, but also sad," Blaquiere said. "It's sort of bittersweet because we've been working on it so long."

The production has been in the works since early fall, Blaquiere said.

"We've been rehearsing Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday for the past month for the show," she said. "We've basically been living here."



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About 300 guests were in attendance throughout the weekend, according to Blaquiere. Their efforts in designing a stage, separating tasks and executing a presentable show paid off.

“This is a great way to showcase your talent,” English said. “It’s a great way to make friends. It’s a great way to be exposed to a new environment and also be exposed to something completely outside of your comfort zone.”

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