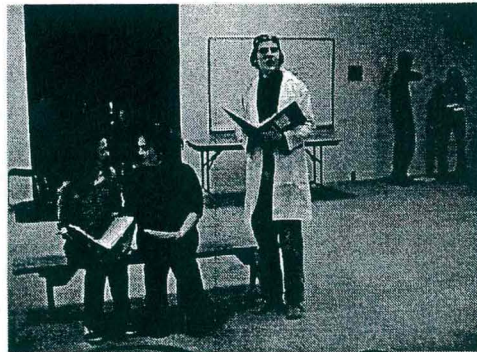




Drama Faculty and Staff
Michael Giannitti, Linda Hurley,
Kirk Jackson, Dina Janis, Frank LaFrazia,
Roberta Levitow, Daniel Michaelson,
Mike Rancourt, Jean Randich, Sue Rees,
Jennifer Rohn, Gladden Schrock
and Terry Teitelbaum

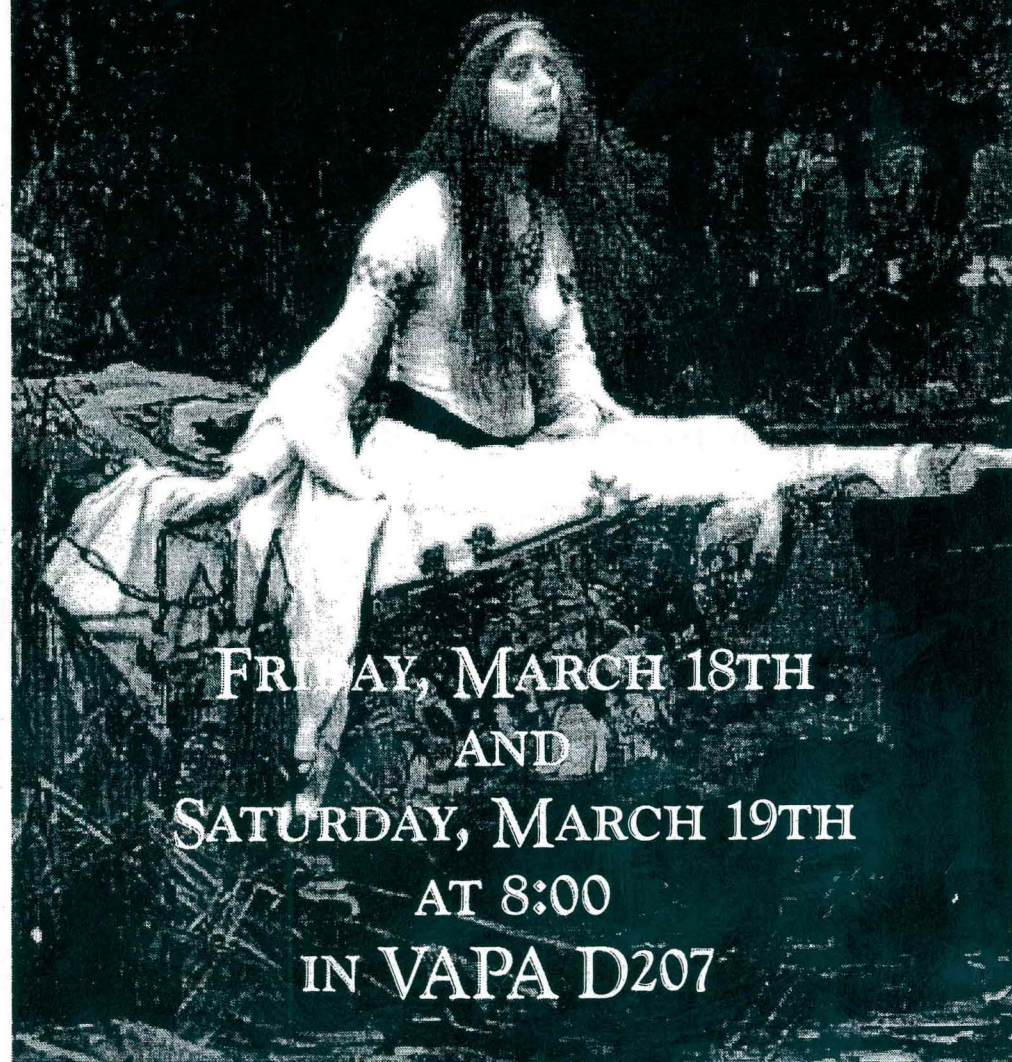


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Drama at Bennington Presents

SONGS OF THE VALLEY

a staged reading of a new play by Ryan C. Tittle



FRIDAY, MARCH 18TH
AND
SATURDAY, MARCH 19TH
AT 8:00
IN VAPA D207

Part of the Songs of the Valley Developmental Workshop

SONGS OF THE VALLEY

a new play written and directed by Ryan C. Tittle

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CHRISTINA SHALLOT.....Catherine Hessing
LARRY ROUNDTREE.....Tom Shoemaker
MATT WABASH.....Stephen Reinstein
GWENDOLYN PARSONS.....Tara Mackey
JOE WABASH.....Eli Phillips
DARLA MAY ROUNDTREE.....Emma Givens
HILDA RAE MCGILLAN.....Sofia Alvarez
DOCTOR WILLIAM ROBERTS.....Caleb Rupp
CUMMERBATCH SAYLN.....Penn W. Elo Genthner

and

BRIAN SCHULTIS

as The Reverend Samuel T. Butchell

SETTING

A bank on the Shallop Lake in Walstone, Walstone County, Alabama. Mt. Sayln overlooks the valley and the lake.

The day is Larry's return from the Air Force. Darla and Hilda have planned a town party on the bank.

ACT I—Afternoon.

ACT II—Late afternoon into early evening.

Music by Tony Rice

Original Song: "Songs of the Valley"

Music and lyric by Elizabeth Kessler

"Love Lifted Me"

Music by Howard E. Smith-Lyric by James Rowe

"who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land"

-Alfred, Lord Tennyson
"The Lady of Shallot"

There will be a ten minute intermission.

TECHNICAL CREW

Assistant Director.....Penn W. Elo Genthner
Stage Manager/Sound Board Operator.....Jeremy Wallace
Assistant Stage Manager/Light Board Operator.....Oberon Redman
Graphic Designer.....Dan Tutor
Costume Coordinator.....Terry Teitelbaum

WRITER/DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I began work on *Songs of the Valley* over a year ago. When the first draft was completed, the drama faculty and I decided that I should workshop the material rather than have the play fully mounted. This may seem like an easy task. After all, one doesn't have to worry too much about sets, lights, and all of the other technical situations one runs into when you produce a play. On the other hand, the "workshop" is a form of theatre-making that can open up tons of cans of worms that could make a play collapse under their weight.

There have been many plays that have been ruined by over-development. Plays that have been chewed up to the point where the author has no idea what he/she is doing because a committee has written the piece. This is not to say that theatre is not a collaborative art form. It is. But, it is a form that begins with a singular vision that a team then magnifies, amplifies, improves, and makes soar. So, you have to know your play, you have to know yourself, you have to be thoroughly shakeable and unshakeable at the same time before you can workshop. Otherwise, the workshop doesn't work.

For the past week, these actors have worked very hard. They have attempted to inhabit these characters with life and humor. Even in a week in which the campus is devastated, they rose above and beyond to make the workshop worthwhile and the reading that you're seeing tonight a unique Drama at Bennington experience.

This reading serves as the first part of my two-part senior project. Next week, after D207 will be inhabited by another production, I will go back to my drawing board and re-think this play...or begin to work on another. And, on April 25th, I shall reconvene with actors for another workshop—one that will, hopefully, continue to reflect to my progress as an artist—as a person who is unshakeably a playwright, but who is continuing to morph, just like this play has in the past week. I hope you appreciate the work these actors have done and join me again in April to continue this exploratory and eye-opening art form we call drama.

Special thanks to my family, Penn W. Elo Genthner (a great colleague and an even better human being), David Henry Hwang, Lee Eric Shackleford, Elizabeth Adkisson, Randy Marsh, members of the drama faculty and staff, the drama students at Bennington College, the many people who have shared their thoughts on this piece, the Otaku, and especially Gladden Schrock, who has made me a better dramatist and a better human being by my simply knowing him. God bless you.

This play is dedicated to the love of my life—Beth. We'll be out of here soon!