

THEATER

WSU students perform Ibsen's 'A Doll's House'

A Doll's House continues its rotating repertory through Dec. 15, at Hilberry Theatre, Detroit. Tickets \$12-\$20, call (313) 677-2972.

By PAMELA JOY MCGOWAN
SPECIAL WRITER

Wayne State University performers bring 19th century feminism to audiences in the new millennium with A Doll's House.

Directed by Edward G. Smith, the story revolves around delicate, spoiled Nora (Shelly Gaza), the wife of a bank manager. She is an obedient wife and dutiful mother, but she has a secret—years ago, she borrowed money

to care for her ailing husband from a man named Krogstad (Chad Patrick Smith) and forged her sick father's signature on the contract.

She partially confides this secret to her old friend Kristine (Tyla Abercrombie) as though it is the only excitement in her life besides spending money. When she discovers that her secret is more than just a secret, it is also a crime, she begins to panic, fearing her husband Torvald (Dallas E. Henry) will find out. As Nora becomes more involved in the blackmail scheme she has set in motion, we see her change from a "flitty little bird" to a

frightened girl and then, finally, to a confident woman. In the end, it is love that saves Torvald's career, but it is not the love his wife.

Shelly Gaza gives an excellent performance as Nora, displaying a wide range of emotions. She begins the play full of energy, selfish and childlike as she coaxes her husband into giving her more money to spend on shopping sprees. She soon becomes desperate and paranoid as she waits for Torvald to find out about her illegal infidelity. At the end of the metamorphosis, Gaza is a stronger and more confident Nora who does not hesitate to

admit her real feelings to herself and to her husband. There is no point in the production when one does not believe that Gaza truly is Nora.

As the conservative and controlling Torvald, Dallas E. Henry is remarkably strong. His character's range, though not as expansive as Nora's, allows the audience to see some passion and humility mixed in with his prevailing uptight persona.

He weakens slightly—and quickly reaches for his wallet—when Nora "asks prettily" for some shopping money, but when she accuses him of being petty, he unwinds with a controlled

sort of vengeance.

Henry's last scene in the play challenges him to perform an almost bipolar array of emotions in a short time, and the third-year student shines.

Interestingly, though it probably was not the intent of Henrik Ibsen, many of Torvald's lines today translate into very chauvinist remarks and drew laughter from the audience. It did play well, taking the sharp edge off of the drama a bit.

Other notable performances include Chad Patrick Smith as Krogstad and Seth Amadei as Dr. Rank. Smith rises into the drama of the production with his

roaring promise to Nora, "If I am hurled into the gutter a second time, I'll take you with me." Meanwhile, Amadei limps in and out of the scenes, eventually letting Nora in on a little secret of his own.

The beautiful set and costumes (right down to the copious mustache of Dr. Rank) provide the audience with an understanding of the bourgeois lifestyle into which Torvald and Nora are trying to fit.

The sound and lighting were virtually flawless. Edward G. Smith has assembled quite a talented cast and crew for this production of A Doll's House.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

Table with movie listings for various theaters including National Amusements, Showcase, Star Theatres, and United Artists. Columns include theater name, movie title, rating, and showtimes.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Scheduled to open Friday, Nov. 16
HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE
Harry Potter has spent the first 10 years of his life living under the stairs in the house of his aunt and uncle, who generally dislike him. Then, one day, a giant comes to him with an invitation to study at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry soon discovers that there are two worlds: One is the dreary world of the muggles where he's grown up, and the other is one of magic and fantasy, and it's the latter in which he's destined to live. Stars Daniel Radcliffe, Sean Duggan, David Bradley, John Cleese, Robbie Coltrane, Alfie Enoch, Tom Felton, Rupert Grint and Richard Griffiths.



'Witchy ways': Daniel Radcliffe (left) stars in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, opening Friday.

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