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

A Doll's House continues in rotat-ing repertory through Dec. 15, at Hilberry Theater, Detroit. Tickets \$12-\$20, call (313) 677-2972.

BY PAMELA JOY MCGOWAN SPECIAL WRITER

Wayne State University per-formers bring 19th century femi-nism to audiences in the new millennium with A Doll's House.

Directed by Edward G. Smith, Directed by Edward G. Smith, the story revolves around deli-cate, 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 Abercrumbie) 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 Norn becomes more involved in the blackmail scheme she has fallen prey to, 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 Tor-vald's career, but it is not the love his wife.

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 legal infidelity. At the end of the metamorphosis, Gaza is a stronger and more confident is a stronger and more confident Nora who does not hesitate to

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.

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, Amadel limps in and out of the scenes, eventually let-ting Nora in on a little secret of

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.

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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.

Is roora.

As the conservative and controlling Torvald, Dallas E. Henry is romarkably 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 persons.

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

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

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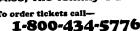
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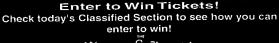
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