

One-Act competition highlighted local talent

The Nutmeg Players presented their 15th Annual One-Act Drama Festival earlier this winter. Although the performance of Dave Wight as Herbert in "I'm Herbert" had much to recommend it, the winner of the competition was "Siblings."

Written and directed by Pat Souney, with music and lyrics by Kathleen Dahill, "Siblings" will go on to represent the Nutmeg Players at the Associated Community Theaters of Connecticut Festival, to take place sometime this summer.



SPOTLIGHT

Corinna Clendenen

"Siblings" first played at the Stony Creek Puppet House Theater in 1992. Since then Souney and Dahill have been fine-tuning it and have honed it into a smooth, harmonious piece. It is funny and sad, light-hearted and soulful. The wide range of emotions and issues are ones that anyone familiar with siblings will recognize.

The props set the stage. They consist of 4-foot-high sculptural letters that spell out "SIBLINGS." These white props are draped with an assortment of clothes, like a messy room.

The nine-member cast plays a variety of teenage brothers and sisters who wrestle with typical family rivalries and attachments. Their spats include fighting over the telephone, a bicycle, the bathroom, the computer, which parent loves who best. The lyrics allow the siblings to describe their relationships in the slang of their own generation - "We love 'em a lot - NOT!"

THEATER

The Broadway show tune style, with its fast beat, is well woven with the dialogue. The exchange between song and spoken word is quick, at times rapid-fire, with lines shouted between bits of song. This is quite appropriate for the teenagers who play it. One scene uses the boys singing on one half of the stage, and the girls talking on the other. The clipped interchange is very effective: "Stay out of my stuff, stay out of my room, stay out of my face, stay out of my life!"

All is not contentious on the home front, however. Tamara Spiewak sings a lovely song about her sorrow at her sister leaving home. Her soprano voice is sweet and moving, and is matched by her equally good performance; she is convincing in her loss.

Walter Corbiere performs a monologue about a boy who is forbidden to see his gay brother, an actor in New York. The piece is poignant in describing the father, who understands nothing but working at the plant, bowling on Wednesday and church on Sunday. Corbiere's delivery and singing successfully pull off this emotionally demanding scene.

The play is neatly wound up by revisiting the opening scene. All the problems bickered over, like who gets the car tonight, are amicably solved. Any problems this play may have had have also been solved. The players should enter the statewide competition confidently as representatives of shoreline talent. The competition will take place May 6 and 7 at the H.P. Wilson Community Center in Windsor.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Corinna Clendenen, a Madison resident, holds a bachelor's degree in art history and a master's degree in film criticism. She has been writing reviews for newspapers since the mid-1970s.

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