

Asbestos plagues building plans for Fine Arts theatre

By Jess Decina

Rider's Fine Arts majors were met with an unexpected plot twist when they arrived back at school in September.

Construction on the studio theater in Fine Arts, also known as the black box room, has come to a halt. Toward the end of August, asbestos—an air toxin found primarily in older buildings—was found beyond the walls and floor, making the site temporarily unsafe for any construction.

According to Fine Arts Chair Dr. Patrick Chmel, the black box theater was scheduled to go under “total renovation” this summer in order to be ready by September. The new room would be turned into a professional-looking theater, complete with brand new dressing rooms and fully equipped light and sound booths overlooking the stage, Chmel said.

“It’s going to look like a million bucks when it’s done,” he said.

Instead, the room has been stripped of its floor and furniture, making it unsuitable for classes or shows to take place. The process of relocating students’ classes as well have been “a nightmare” for the department, he said.

Theater students were thrown off the most, as they lost access to a room that they had performed in many times last year. Chad Schubert, senior and Vice President of the honorary theater fraternity Alpha Psi Omega, said the unexpected delay “caused havoc on everyone’s plans.”

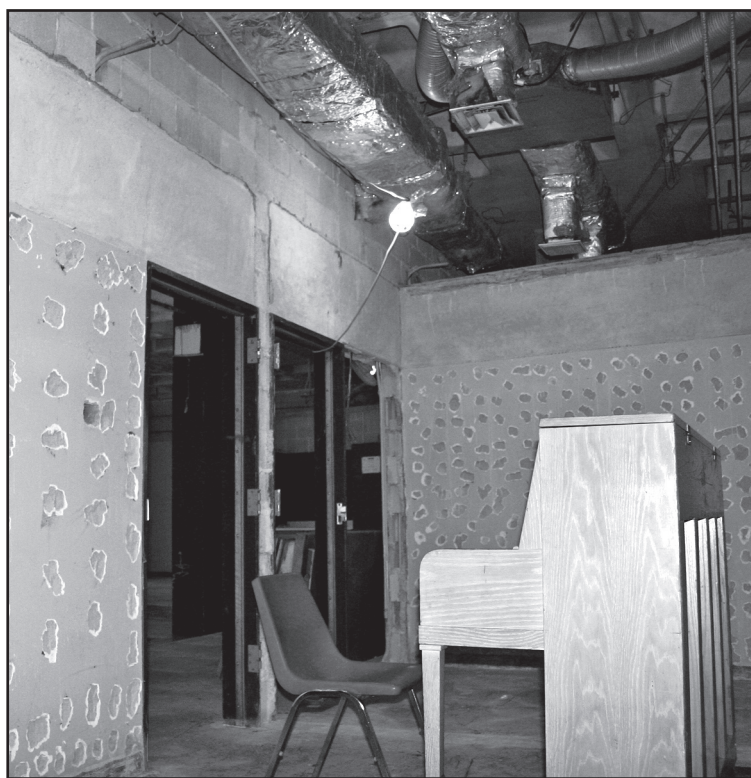


Photo by Caitlyn N. Berardi

Renovation on the Fine Arts Studio Theater was halted after asbestos was found at the end of August. The asbestos was removed, but the department is waiting for a permit to complete the construction.

When the members of Alpha Psi Omega found out about the delay, they had to move quickly to postpone all student-run shows that were supposed to take place in the black box theater. Their sketch comedy show, *Live With Alpha Psi It's Saturday Night* (SNL), usually performed at the end of October, was moved to December, right around the end of the first semester, said Schubert.

“Everyone gets excited to spend the first month or two [of school] working on a show like SNL,” he said. “Instead they will have to fight the stress [of the show] and prepare for finals.”

The room’s restricted access may also cause problems for the mainstage production of *Hair*

this November, as the black box normally is used as a dressing room for the actors. Without the room, actors may have to make quick changes “in offices and bathrooms,” said Chmel.

Though there have been no changes made to the empty room, asbestos no longer lurks in its corners. The renovation is expected to be completed by Nov. 1, 2005. According to Chmel, the fine arts department is waiting for Lawrenceville Township to grant them a permit to complete the renovation. In the meantime, students continue their patient wait.

“Once the studio gets done, we’ll be so happy,” Schubert said. “We’ll never take it for granted again.”

‘HAZING’

Continued from page 2

Greek.”

The purpose of his speech was to help improve the Greek system; he said the way that can be achieved is through helping brothers and sisters in their chapters. Sullivan said the problem with sororities and fraternities is that often “we put up with behavior that we normally wouldn’t.”

However, he also said that when the “idiot makes [a person] miserable,” one must deal with his or her own problems first. A person must deal with his or her own problems and then help other members; that is the only way the system will work.

“I love my fraternity, but I would throw away my badge and my chapter to save one life. I’d give up my fraternity to save one brother—that’s all that matters to me,” Sullivan said. “If you do what you pledged in your ritual to your brothers or sisters, then you did the best you could do.”

‘PROP’

Continued from page 1

the fines if it keeps happening,” he said. “If we see it, we will document it and we hope that people hold everyone responsible to police.”

Hill Residence Director Ryan Parsons, whose building houses pods that will fall under this new policy, said that he and his staff have been working hard towards educating their residents about the dangers and consequences that surround the propping of doors.

“We have posted signs in a variety of places and have spoken to pod residents just as a reminder to discourage them from propping doors,” he said. “They will continue to get more information about it with the consequences.”

Mosley reiterated the reason and timing for the “stop the prop” program, recognizing its unsafe nature.

“This is a last ditch effort in saying that propping a door is unsafe,” said Mosley.

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