The Black Box Theater ready for grand re-opening

By Jess Decina

For an entire semester, the studio in the Fine Arts building had little to show for itself except for barren walls and trac-es of asbestos.

That has changed. The room underwent serious con-struction during winter break, is now a fully-functioning class-room and studio, and is just one or two minor changes away from total completion, accord-ing to Dr. Patrick Chmel, chair person of Fine Arts.

“The room is 99 percent complete,” he said. “We have acoustical sound panels that need to be mounted, and cus-tom-made dressing tables in both dressing rooms will be added in the near future.”

The mini-theater now includes an array of new fea-tures designed mostly with theater majors and minors in mind. New lighting and sound equipment, a glassed-in light-ing sound booth, a new stage and permanent backstage areas make the renovated space ideal for performers, Chmel said.

“The new facility also is breathtaking,” he said. “It’s a wonderful extension of the Yvonne Theater.”

The new studio plays other roles in the lives of Fine Arts students. They can now attend classes and use the space to rehearse scenes. According to Professor Miriam Mills of the Fine Arts Department, the stu-dio is “a spectacular new place to hold classes.”

“The new studio will give the Fine Arts Department greater flexibility,” she said. Mills has another reason to be thrilled, however. Under her direction, the second main stage show of the year, The Servant of Two Masters, will be the first show to debut on the new stage.

The studio will act as a great morale-booster for the stu-dents who use it most, afford-ing them the opportunity to have a new place in which they will rehearse and perform, said Mills. Kerry Bowers, a junior theater arts major, agrees.

“The new studio is going to make acting classes, Alpha Psi Omega performances and main stage dressing rooms more orga-nized and better for Rider’s Fine Arts students,” Bowers said.

Despite a long wait, Chmel is pleased with the end result. The new theater will provide students with a more sophis-ticated area to learn and work in, he said.

“It was very much worth the wait,” Chmel said. “The day will come when we won’t remember how long it took.”

The Black Box Theater was barren before renovations started. The mini-theater includes many new features such as new equipment, glassed-in lighting and sound booth and a new stage.

ISLES

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produce meaningful research that ultimately this organization could use to see where they’re going to go in the future.”

According to Sands, the students will use the theories and methods they have learned in class and apply it to their work for the organization.

“Methodologically, they’ve learned how to find data, the best methods to use to find data, and then how to present that information,” she said.

The series of assignments that the students complete throughout the semester will form their final papers and ulti-mately be used in the presenta-tion they’ll be making to Isles at the end of the semester, said Sands. The fact that the organi-zation will use the students’ actual research means that the students have to ensure accura-cy, which seems to excite them, she said.

“We need to be right,” said Sands. “We need to be accurate, we need to be thorough, and we need to be professional. And I think they kind of like that.”

So far, the students have met at Isles to get an idea of the programs Isles conducts and to view its facilities. They have also completed one of the assignments, which was to cre-ate a demographic profile of the community including maps, graphs and tables, which was put into a PowerPoint presentation. This weekend, the stu-dents are taking a tour of the township, which is one of their requirements.

“So, the students are going out there and kind of getting a snapshot of what Hamilton Township is like,” said Sands.

The program with Isles began after Dr. Barry Truchil, chairperson of the Sociology Department, got in contact with the organization and worked out the details. In the future, according to Truchil, the Sociology Department hopes to involve the mayors of Hamilton Township and Trenton, where the group is currently working, in the program. The partnership also helps with one of President Rozanski’s goals of strategic planning for the University, which is to increase connections to the out-side communities, said Truchil.

“It’s giving the students an opportunity to get hands-on research and help the commu-nity at the same time,” said Truchil.

Both the students and the organization will benefit, according to Sands.

“These organizations have a need for research, expert research, and the Universities have the supply of researchers, so it’s a very good match,” said Sands. “The students get to learn by doing, and the organi-zing gets quality research.”

“I am really excited to working with Isles,” said senior Kati Kerner, a sociology major in the class. “I think it is going to be a great experience learning about what our community has to offer and what still needs to be done to improve it.”

Moore Library Makes Improvements

Construction on the Moore Library’s front entrance began Wednesday, Feb. 8. According to F. William Chickerling, Dean of University Libraries, the main goal of the project is to provide extend-ed study hours on the North side of the front of the build-ing. He said the “facility will provide a comfortable, attrac-tive and food-friendly place to read and study.” Also, wire-less Internet access will be available.

RIDER TO HOST BREAST CANCER CONFERENCE

Breast cancer patients, sur-vivors and their families will have an opportunity to learn about emerging issues in breast cancer research in a day-long conference.

The topic, presented by both New Jersey Commission on Cancer Research and Rider University will be “10 Years of the Breast Cancer Research Fund: A Celebration of Survivornship.” It will be held tomorrow, Saturday, Feb. 11, in the Bart Luedeke Center.

Black History Trivia Show at Westminster

Rider’s celebration of Black History Month hits the Princeon Campus on Thursday, Feb. 16, with “You Think You Know,” hosted by Area Director Jamel Mosley. The trivia night is sponsored by Westminster Choir College and the Black and Hispanic Alliance.

Contestants compete with Black History Month trivia to win a grand prize. The show starts at 8 p.m. at the Seabrook Lounge.