**SEC film ‘Mona Lisa’ draws smiles**

By Jordi Cantero
Staff Writer

In *Mona Lisa Smile*, Julia Roberts plays a strong and forceful woman striving for change, much like her Academy Award-Winning character Erin Brockovich, but in a much less controversial manner. Roberts plays an opinionated college professor in a 1950’s all-girls school, torn between doing her job of teaching art history and making her students think by really opening their eyes.

In the 1950s, women were expected to go to college, but by a certain age they were expected to be married. Not much was expected of them except for cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. Roberts’ character Katherine Watson is appalled by the attitude held by her students, some of which are played by actresses Kirsten Dunst, Julia Stiles and Maggie Gyllenhaal.

When Katherine arrives at the university she realizes that her students are extremely bright and well-mannered, but, when asked a question to which an answer cannot be found in a textbook, much to her disappointment they are confused and remain silent. At first the girls are unable to give their own opinions of works of art and appear to be nothing more than programmed robots caught what to say and at what moment.

Katherine tries to take charge of her students’ lives by opening their eyes to options other than marriage right out of college. She wants her students to make the most out of life and believes that their talents would be wasted on undemanding tasks such as baking and sewing. She believes in them and pushes them to do more than what is asked for by their other professors. Unfortunately, she finds resistance along the road to revolutionizing the way her students think.

Betsy’s character Betty Warren is smitten with tradition and does not like what Katherine is trying to achieve. She tries to bring Katherine’s spirit down in class. Although this hurts Katherine she still strives for the girls’ sake. Much to Katherine’s disappointment, however, less is seen of Betsy once she gets married. Betsy appears to be jealous of her friends who start buying into making more of their lives, but still plays the character of the perfect housewife.

Katherine eventually invests her time in helping Stiles’ character Joan Bradbywn in applying to law school, even though she too will soon be walking down the aisle. Overall Katherine continually makes every effort she can to help her students fight against the societal expectations for them to do nothing more than talk when spoken to. It is unclear whether or not Katherine has succeeded until the end of the film.

Roberts gives a good performance in what is a satisfying film. It is mostly a celebration of the journey women have taken over the past fifty years in getting their words read, their voices heard and their ideas discussed.

The supporting cast does justice to their characters and the setting. The film portrays the male dominated 1950’s very accurately and opens a window to the youngest of the baby boomers and teens alike to see what the everyday closed-door workings of the 1950’s were really like.

It is a good film as well as an inspirational story for both women and men who want to see something different from the ordinary action flick or rom-comedy. Come out to the Bart Luedeke Center Theater all this weekend at 7:30 p.m. to view *Mona Lisa Smile* but don’t expect to be able to pick up any guys.

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**Start off spring Westminster style**

By Nicole Southern
Entertainment Editor

Spring’s finally here and the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air. But nothing can compare to the beautiful sound of chirping birds has filled the air.

On this Sunday, April 18, the Westminster Choir College (WCC) has four concerts scheduled before the end of the school year that students from both the Westminster and Lawrenceville campuses might enjoy.

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“This is the Westminster Choir’s first performance with its new conductor, Sun Min Lee,” said Sears.

According to Sears, the performances will be enjoyable for all who attend. She urges students not to miss out on the concerts because of financial concerns.

“Rider University students, faculty and staff are entitled to receive one free ticket (with ID) to each performance,” said Sears.

Students may get tickets before the performance or buy them at the door. They can be purchased in person or ordered over the phone.

“Tickets may be obtained by coming to the Westminster box office in Williamson Hall on the Westminster campus between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays,” said Sears.