

Dreaming a little dream

While My Mother Lay Dreaming

Directed by John Hudson
Starring Coralie Cairns and Richard Meen
Runs until 29 October
Varscona Theatre

VICTOR VARGAS
Arts & Entertainment Staff

In 1979, the Iranian Revolution prompted the nationalization of the country's oil industry, forcing the price of oil to jump to record heights. During the next decade, Albertan families become rich overnight, and outsiders start flocking to the province in order to seek their fortunes. Varscona Theatre opening production, *While My Mother Lay Dreaming*, tells such tales about wealth and prosperity, but also shows the opposite side by focusing on how one family completely missed the rush and saw their friends climb the social ladder.

Several dramatic stage comedies have either been too funny, losing their edge, or so serious that well-crafted jokes seem awkward and bring the audience from an emotional high to a low. Thankfully, *While My Mother Lay Dreaming* manages to strike a perfect balance between the two, allowing the audience to laugh and enjoy themselves, and at the same time worry about what may befall the characters.

The genius of this play is that despite the stereotypical nature of these characters, the actors make them work.

The play's personalities are people we've met during the course of our lives. Bill (Richard Meen) is a teenager who does drugs, works a poor job and tries to win over the wild Jennifer (Lynley Hall). His mother, Peggy (Coralie Cairns), is the neurotic meddler that wants the family to be together, but continues to embarrass Bill and push away her workaholic



LAUREN STIEGLITZ

ROAD TRIP! The Varscona's opening production sounds like it's one wild ride.

husband Vic (Duval Lang). The genius of this play is that despite the stereotypical nature of these characters, the actors make them work.

In roles that could easily have been overplayed, the actors manage to come out on top most of the time. Notably, Coralie Cairns conveys those special "motherly quirks"; she becomes not only Peggy, but all of our mothers at once. However, a few of the performances were a bit off: there are times when the character of Darcy (Kevin Corey) performs disingenuous emotions, and when Richard Meen is beaten to a pulp it definitely doesn't seem like much has happened. These moments are rare and far between, though, and overall, the actors remain strong.

Apart from the performers, designer Kerem Cetinel and Director John Hudson's hard work with the set and choreography really shows through

in *While My Mother Lay Dreaming*. Action moves to every part of the stage throughout the play, and there's a surprising amount of attention paid to creative props, especially when plainer ones could have sufficed. For example, four chairs are brought out and used to represent the inside of a Volkswagen Beetle, allowing the audience to determine that the squished vehicle belongs to the younger character.

While My Mother Lay Dreaming also suffers a bit from the time period it's set in, mainly since the majority of viewers haven't lived through the '70s. Jokes made about the legendary band known as Rush, the vinyl record and off-hand comments about the Trudeau era may be a bit lost in time. But still, the play's wit breaks past this barrier, allowing its commentaries about family, wealth and friendship to resonate with all audiences.



NEAL WILDING

TOOTIN' HIS HORN Magnolia Electric Co supplied the Sidetrack's audience with enough energy to last all night long.

MARKET RESEARCH INTERVIEWER



- Conduct interviews over the telephone from our centrally located call centre, accurately enter data into a computer system.
- Absolutely no sales involved.
- Position requires excellent telephone manner and typing skills.
- Flexible scheduling with shift choices.
- Company benefits plan.
- \$10.50 / hour to start, with performance based reviews.

Please mail, fax or email your resume to:
2nd Floor, 10304 - 108 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 1L9
Fax: 780-485-5085
Email: HR@TrendResearch.ca
Phone: 780-485-6558

TREND HIRES ON AN ONGOING BASIS

Campus Recreation
Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation

WE SUPPORT
United Way

CARDIO DANCE PARTY

for the United Way

Fee: \$1
All proceeds will be donated to the United Way

Wednesday, October 18
1205-1255
Main Gym, Van Vliet Centre

Come join some of Campus Recreation's dance and fitness instructors as they lead a fun, dance-oriented workout including hip hop, belly dance, 80's retro and more!
No previous dance experience is necessary, just the ability to have fun!



GATEWAY A&E
Closet artistes since 1910.

This painting is, like, so surreal. It makes me want to slip into a drug-induced coma and dream about pixies. A lighter side of the greasy git is definitely being expressed through the material brush strokes and use of white scratches. Look for yourself; can't you hear him calling to you, saying "I'm not a bad person, really; I never killed Dumbledore. We had a relationship like no other, and I mourn for his loss."

If you want to discuss the impact of art on society, or just gossip about whether Snape is really a treacherous murderer, then come write for *Gateway A&E* (meetings Thursdays at 5pm in 3-04 SUB). Sometimes we even play with finger paints after munching on hash brownies. Who would want to miss out on all that fun?