

Scarlet Letter shines at Bas Bleu

■ Rendition of classic novel hits Fort Collins theater with a modern twist

By Amy Hochevar
dish@lamar.colostate.edu

The Bas Bleu Theatre brings forth a compelling love story that shows audiences the many challenges of life.

The Bas Bleu Theatre, 401 Pine St., welcomes Peter Anthony, a multi-disciplinary theater artist, director and designer for the production of "The Scarlet Letter." Anthony has worked in Colorado, California and Oregon staging his talents through classic to contemporary drama and multimedia dance-theater works. Anthony is also a professor at Front Range Community College.

"The Scarlet Letter," written by Phyllis Nagy, was adapted from the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The story is about one woman's courageous defiance against the severe strictures of a Puritan society in the late 1850's. "The Scarlet Letter" is infused with a deep undercurrent of sensuality and the strain of the force of nature pushing up against the societal mask of morality.

"(The play) is a wonderful adaptation of the novel," Anthony said. "I think any story that has survived may have historical and universal resonance and that's why it lasts ... the novel carries this."

Steve Wahlfeldt, a language arts teacher at Rocky Mountain High School, uses this novel as a required reading for his classes.

"It's interesting to see how they put a modern twist in the novel," Wahlfeldt said during the intermission when he was noting the language used in the play.

Anthony said "The Scarlet Letter" underscores themes still so very much alive today. Whether it is individuality vs. community or visibility vs. concealment, the most primal opposition in this play is love vs. hate.

He said this is a love story about overcoming obstacles and discovering what each of them is and what they are to each other.

Heather Lawrence-Wescott

"THE SCARLET LETTER" INFO.

- Bas Bleu Theatre
401 Pine St.
- Run Dates:
February 18 to March 26
- Price:
\$17 General
\$12 Senior
\$10 Student
- Box Office hours:
1-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday
- 498-8949
- <http://www.basbleu.org>

plays the part of Hester, the young woman who faces many obstacles in a Puritan society in early America. By the end, she shows her courageous defiance and is still able to stand up for herself.

Lawrence-Wescott said that all the actors find parts in their character that they can relate to. She admires her character because Hester takes something that is ugly to the world and makes it beautiful. She wears a scarlet letter to show her past mistakes and is not afraid to make it known to the world.

During part of the play Hester cries out, "I'm com-



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fortable with unpredictable weather." Lawrence-Wescott said she sometimes finds herself quoting her characters and finds truth in what they say.

"It's funny how the plays that you do begin to parallel

your life." Lawrence said. "The characters and situations become all too familiar."

Eri Leth, a senior associate's degree student at Front Range, is a student in one of Anthony's classes. Leth found

the play to be very well performed.

"Art is the expression of intense emotion," Lawrence said. "Without art, you walk around all bottled up."