

# Current ISSUES

## Audience is a part of art not apart from art

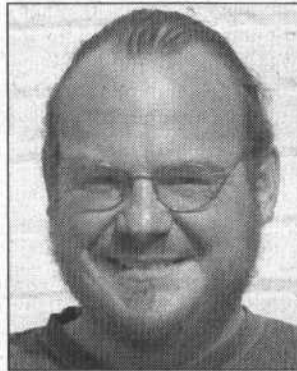
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Last night I went to the CCHS production of the Tiger Theatre named "What's My Line? A Night of One Acts." The performance was great as the students played to the audience, including them in the act of creation. I believe that this is the most important aspect of art.

In June of 2003 I took a trip to England and Ireland to study literature with the University of Southern Colorado. The trip was wonderful and included a day in London at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

Along with building a replica of the Globe Theatre, the theatre plays Shakespeare as closely to the original as they can, including the use of all male casts and period music. What was fascinating was the inclusion of the audience as a part of the creation of the play.

The play put on by Tiger Theatre last night reminded me of the importance of art



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August Mergelman and the Tiger Theatre actors for choosing such wonderful plays to populate the scenery of the CCHS Auditorium.

One scene in particular seemed very pertinent to me and I was shocked to discover that real violence is no longer as interesting as is the suggestion of violence. Amber D. Dasugo played the part of a shepherder named Cothurnus who dies a violent death

and audience. If the artist has done a good job the audience has the chance to be a part of the creation of the art. That is exactly what this production did and I would like to c o m m e n d

by Corydon, played by Jonathan Remillard. Yet, Cothurnus is never touched by Corydon as she is choked to death by a necklace.

Had Corydon actually grabbed Cothurnus and choked her, the audience would not have gotten the sense of helplessness that she depicted. With a violent death involving a murderer we can create in our minds a solution to the problem, but when the attacker is imagined there is little means by which the victim can be saved.

In contrast, Corydon is poisoned but there is nothing about poison that shocks us into feeling the helplessness of violent murder.

I have been thinking about the ability of the artist to shock the audience to their senses ever since. A victim of murder is surely something that sends the people closest to the victim away with a sense of helplessness.

Drama is a wonderful experience because it transports us to a situation that we might

not have not encountered before and it allows us to feel the emotions related to that situation without any serious repercussions. Its kind of like being able to understand that a flame is hot without actually getting burned.

All too often artists leave the audience out of the creative process. The machine that drives sales believes that they have to "dumb down" their art in order for people to like and understand it. If the audience has to think past "Ooh that must have hurt," then the creator is in danger of not earning their next pay check.

It would not be fair to say that all artists do this today. However, the more stress that society puts on artists to embrace capitalist ideas means more pressure to do art because it is marketable, or to create a market through pop- culture. Will they still make us a part of the creation or will they only think about the corporation's logos when they create their next piece?