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"I-Ya-I-Ya-O" premieres at Gardner-Webb, 'So funny you'll lose your dentures'



Christina Ewing (left) and Andrew Meyer (right) in a scene from the world premier of I-Ya-I-Ya-O. Photo by Hannah Haggerty.

It was hard to find a seat in Gardner-Webb's Millennium Playhouse on Nov. 19 for the grand premier of the comedy "I-Ya-I-Ya-O" written by Claude Douglas Brian.

The play is based on the lives of three old ladies and their goal to ensure the happiness of their niece through the use of colorful schemes. The protagonists were unconventional characters—speaking their minds, performing interesting rituals and conducting secret meetings. During a "truth ceremony," all parties could only tell the truth, leading to an interesting outcome.

The three ladies—distinct types of grandmothers in their own accord—are played by Caroline Dedmon, Deany Rae Martin and former adjunct professor at Gardner-Webb, Kyrin Packard. In spite of their differences, the grandmothers work together to execute their happiness-laden plans for their loving niece, Thia, who is played by junior ASL major Christina Ewing.

As the play began, Packard (as the eldest aunt, Mary Novella) made the audience laugh from her very first line,



From left: Deany Rae Martin, Andrew Meyer, Kyrin Packard and Caroline Dedmond. Photo by Hannah Haggerty.

humor came together quite nicely."

"I-Ya-I-Ya-O" will continue to run in the Millennium Playhouse on Nov. 21 at 7:30 p.m., and Nov. 22 at 2:30 p.m.

proving to be the crowd's favorite character. She played her role realistically and held the audience at her palm with the deliverance of every comedic line.

The laughter in the theatre became so loud and contagious that the actors had to hold for laughs several times. The play received a standing ovation, and cheers only grew louder as the three aunts took their bows. Through their applause and cheers, the audience seemed to agree that the premier was well worth their time.

"The play is so funny you'll lose your dentures," said senior Daniel Woodie.

Christian Vaughan, a freshman, also agreed and added, "Overall, I felt that the complex, yet manageable plot and clever



Caroline Dedmond portraying the role of one of the aunts. Photo by Hannah Haggerty.