

STORY BY ALEXIS EINERSON
PHOTOS BY NATE WAGNER

LEFT: Dinah Lord, played by Abbie Miller, puts on a tap-dancing show for her house guests in last practice of "The Philadelphia Story." Its debut is tonight at 7:30 at the Howell Theatre, 12th & R streets.



'Philadelphia Story' separates class, love

■ The play's back to turn the audience's attention to the coming of age of the characters.

Romance, affairs, true love and comedy - these are the things that make up "The Philadelphia Story."

The story of a woman from a very wealthy family in Philadelphia, Tracy Lord, and the three men in her life is really a coming of age story, director Virginia Smith said.

"Tracy has really high standards," Smith said. "During the course of the play, she realizes

that what she wants to be is a whole human being. She wants to have an understanding heart - a compassionate heart."

The play, based on a 1940 play and the subsequent 1940 movie, starred Katherine Hepburn on both stage and screen. It won the Academy Award for best picture.

Each of the men in Tracy's life has a different function, said Steve Barth, who plays Tracy's ex-husband C.K. Dexter Haven. And, he said, each one of these men is the source of enlightenment for Tracy.

Amber C. Irvin, who plays Tracy Lord, said she felt "The Philadelphia Story" is a coming of age story for a lot of the different characters, not just Tracy.

"We all start off with faces that we want to hide behind and bit by bit the play chisels away those layers until you get to an actual person," Irvin said.

Richard Smith, who plays Tracy's fiancé George Kitteredge, said he felt that his character had a lot to do with the social classes.

George is a worker for Tracy's father who has worked his way up the chain of command, and now he is marrying Tracy, Richard Smith said.

"Although I think there is a general attraction," Richard Smith said, "I think a lot of it has to do with George's aspirations of success."

For the character of Macauley (Mike) Conner, played by Kyle Johnston, social standings and love involve the character.

Mike falls for Tracy, Johnston said, and he has to give up his preconceptions about the rich and the Lord family.

But Barth said he thought the story was a true love story, and class didn't have anything to do with love.

"I don't necessarily see the love and class going hand in hand, but they both play an intricate part," Barth said. "I think that the enlightenment that Tracy undergoes is the enlightenment that love exists beyond all (classes)."

Irvin said she agreed with love being the true story line. The class just sets the story up, she said.

"It really is a true love story," Irvin said. "It's such a great story for Valentine's Day."

TOP RIGHT: Amber Irvin laughs at a comment as she plays Tracy Lord in "The Philadelphia Story." The character Lord is a socialite being pursued by three men.

LEFT: Kyle Johnston and Katherine Nora LeRoy exchange a kiss in character as Macauley Connor, the reporter, and Liz Imbrie, the photographer. "The Philadelphia Story" has been put together over the last six months.



Cinema covers deaf culture

BY CASEY JOHNSON

The film "Sound and Fury" is a searing look at the best interest of children against the survival of a way of life. It is a gripping film about an issue few of us know about.

The Cochlear implant, a controversial device that allows deaf people to hear, is the lightning rod that separates a family about what is best for the children and what will become of the parents.

Filmed mostly on Long Island Sound in New York, the film tackles the 250-year debate between those among the deaf community who lip read and speak and those who use sign language.

Peter Artinian, a leader in the deaf anti-implant community, and his brother, Chris, each face the difficult decision of whether or not the implant is right for their respective children.

When Heather Artinian,

Sound and Fury

★★★★☆

Peter's 5-year-old daughter, approaches him about getting an implant, he is shocked but decides to keep an open mind.

He and his wife Nita (also deaf) believe that the implant is a rejection of deaf culture, a culture they believe is not limited.

Chris Artinian and his wife Mari, a child of deaf parents, have newborn twins, one of whom is deaf.

The documentary also focuses on their decision to give the 11-month-old child an implant, a decision that Mari's parents think is not up to her and her husband Chris.

Peter and his wife are concerned that their daughter may reject them and abandon the "deaf way of life," while Chris and his wife only want their child to have all of the opportunities they can give to him.

The film is loaded with real-life emotional power that pulls

you into the relationships and soon the debate.

As the documentary develops, it is hard not to want to scream back at the players and their arguments on the subject.

At its core, the issue is the survival of deaf culture against progress and the implant, which deaf people believe will render their way of life extinct.

Unfortunately, this is where the film bogs down.

The family becomes divided on the subject, and although the rhetoric is interesting at first, too much of it in the end becomes the film's only downfall.

It is understandable that the film was nominated for an Academy Award.

It is a hard-hitting piece that forces thought. Everyone should see this film in order to gain insight into an often neglected segment of our population.

"Sound and Fury" Not rated. Directed by Josh Aronson. Now playing at the Mary Reipma Ross Theatre.

'Left Behind' faces end of world

■ The movie starring Kirk Cameron delves into the what ifs and forgiveness.

BY SARAH SUMNER

Left Behind

★★★★☆

The end of the world is coming. It's landing in the Middle East and everyone is in deep, deep crap. You better get your butts to church because the Anti-Christ is taking over, and he means business.

"Left Behind" may not scare you, but hopefully it will make you think about why the world is so violent and what we need to do to rectify it.

The Middle East is bombed, but no one is hurt. People are disappearing without a trace out of airplanes, cars on highways and their homes. What is going on? To find out, people are looking to the Bible in Revelations. This is the beginning of the seven years of peace, and the end is near.

New York Times best-selling novel of the same name. It is the first in a series of novels that continue a count down to destruction. Those left on Earth are the ones who will feel the horrors of the end of time; those taken were the ones with faith and are being saved from the devastation.

Kirk Cameron, the lovable Mike Seaver from "Growing Pains," heads up the cast as Buck Williams. He is a lead reporter for the fictional GNN news channel. He finds a connection between the United Nations, the strange disappearances, the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple in the Middle East and the Bible.

Cameron is trying, but nothing could keep the movie from seeming like a Monday night TV show or something that should be on the Odyssey Channel. The story is interesting, but the act-

ing is tedious and slow. The actors perform as if they are reading lines off cue cards. It is like the films the teachers at Pius X High School used to show us in Religion class.

Chelsea Noble, Cameron's real-life wife, plays a flight attendant who attains a job at the UN and is having an affair with a pilot whose family disappears, except for his daughter. Noble isn't in the film much. She does deliver a decent performance, but it is kind of like an after-school special performance.

I have to admit that it is a good try. This is an interesting and important issue for those who want to embrace it. It moves a little quickly and lets the audience hang in the balance, but I think that it is supposed to be taken as suspense (it doesn't work).

"Left Behind." Starring Kirk Cameron, Brad Johnson, and Chelsea Noble. Directed by Vic Sarin. Not rated (violence). Playing at the Cinema Twin.