

# Theater students showcase their talents in the recurring Moorpark College 'Student One Acts'

By Shahbano Raza

This spring, in the Black Box Theatre of Moorpark College's Performing Arts Center, student performers graced the stage in a series of plays referred to as the "Student One Acts."

Split into two sections, Bill A and Bill B, the "Student One Acts" featured one-act plays entirely written, directed and performed by Moorpark College students. Showcased from April 27 to May 7, these short plays were the culmination of months of hard work and effort put in by students and faculty members alike.

Moorpark College Theater Arts Professor Suzanne Fagan was the producer for this semester's plays. Fagan expressed appreciation for these short but packed student-run performances.

"[The show] is a buffet of 10–15-minute stories that are rich in the world they have created," Fagan said. "It really is such a fun night of theatre. [There are so] many different stories fully realized in one night."

As a producer, Fagan was tasked with selecting the plays that were performed this semester. Fagan chose eight plays to be presented, offering audiences pieces that ranged from somber reflections on life tribulations to comedic outbursts of improvisation.

Kyle Kaplan, a theater major, was the assistant stage manager for the entire production and the director of "The Sky Isn't Blue in America," one of the show's more solemn selections.

This was Kaplan's first time directing a project of this magnitude, and he navigated the role through the collaborative spirit he fostered with his peers and his personal connection to the piece. The play highlights the hardship of the Jewish immigrant experience, and Kaplan, who is also Jewish, resonated with the script's premise.

"I knew I was the only person that was capable of directing the play from a cultural standpoint," Kaplan asserted. "But it's also something that is very personal to me, and I really loved the play itself. After I read it, I was like, 'I have to direct this.'"

Kaplan also got to act in this play, albeit unexpectedly. The lead actor of the play was unable to participate in the final performances, so Kaplan ended up taking the stage, despite having no lines memorized.



Ethan Pante (left) and Jeth Logrono (right) perform in "Twisted Trivia" on April 28, 2022. The "Student One Acts" took place in the Black Box Theatre of the Moorpark College Performing Arts Center. Photo credit: David Chavez



Students involved in the “Student One Acts” gather on stage and answer questions from the audience after the performance on April 28,

“It was an interesting thing being able to act with my actors,” Kaplan said. “That wasn’t something I was expecting to be able to do this semester, but it happened, so it was fun, definitely.”

Several students donned multiple hats throughout the performances. Biology major Jeth Logrono co-directed the play “Imitation” but also starred in “Twisted Trivia.”

“Twisted Trivia” offers a sadistically-rooted comedic experience filled with a hilariously gruesome series of twists and turns comprised of kidnapping, game show trivia and cannibalism.

Logrono’s character of the Assistant originally wasn’t even in the script but at Logrono’s request, the character was written in.

“In that show, I have my little moments every now and then where I get to steal the show,” Logrono said.

The audience erupted into laughter whenever the Assistant scampered across the stage, despite the character not having a single line. Logrono portrayed the comedic bizarreness of the Assistant solely through varying dramatic facial expressions and body movements.

“Suzanne likes to say there’s power in silence and stillness,” Logrono said. “But I was not still, just silent. And I still managed to create a lot of attention for myself, which is so cool.”

Other plays featured include “Everything is Fine,” a thought-provoking comparison of the COVID-19 pandemic and a zombie apocalypse, and “Plumbob,” a heart-wrenching commentary on the queer experience.

These performances and more demonstrated that the long-awaited return to in-person performances following the pandemic has been met with enthusiasm, especially by actors.

“There is nothing like being on a stage,” Kaplan said.

The production playbills for this semester can be found [here](#). To view upcoming audition opportunities with Moorpark College’s Theater Arts program, [click here](#).