Seniors take a good “Wiz”
The Senior Show entertains with an alternative “Wizard of Oz”

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“You can’t miss it.” Melissa Pelezzo’s line rang out through Hogan Ballroom at the Senior Show’s production of “The Wiz.” In they came running, the “Yellow Brick Road”-four seniors wearing yellow clothes and smiling as if it was their first day. Among them, was the “star” of the play, Erin Kelleher. When asked how she felt about being the star, Erin took the modest route. “Well, Dorothy would never have reached the Amethyst City without us.”

Completing the Road were Mike Ballway, Pat Driscoll, and Matthew Bumin. Together, they stole every scene they jogged into, pointing the way to a better tomorrow amidst their buckering and dancing.

The Yellow Brick Road represented, if nothing else, the genius of the play. They were indomitable, funny, and the dancing was great. The choreography by Michelle Kelly and Amy Vashisht was outstanding throughout the play, but stood out in the capable hands of oddball Ballway, slick and crazy Driscoll, kooky Kelleher, and, last but not least, Abate.

They illuminated the play whenever they set foot on the stage. Mike Ballway was brilliant as the Secret Service agent protecting the Wiz in the final scene. When asked to explain the depth of his performance as an agent, he said, “My motivation in that scene: I’m taking a chance. Like I might never make it there? Now it’s like I’m taking a chance. I like I might end up in the side of a building somewhere, just one more statistic, not the only entity in Worcester that is trying to kill us students. Not!”

Pat Driscoll also had a large role in the success of the play. The slickness and sway of his dance moves as the Tornado, the Yellow Brick Road, and Glinda’s Entourage - added to the no-holds-barred energy of his performance as the aerobics instructor - gave the Senior Show solidarity and was a constant source of joy.

That’s not even mentioning the capable and often hilarious performances of the Yellow Brick Road’s co-stars, Emi Lizama as Dorothy, Tom Pavlovich as the Tin Man, Dan Kaiser as the Lion, private to these second-semester seniors. The story of a little “girl named Dorothy” who needed to leave her friends and the wonderful, well-kept grounds of the Amethyst City to an uncertain future in a depressingly normal world must have touched a nerve.

Rob Hymas, as the Wiz, expressed mixed feelings anyone who has gone through this school for four years must possess in a scene towards the end of the play. Asking his fellow citizens to give of themselves as “men and women for others,” the Wiz explains: “I’m not asking you to work at a soup kitchen or tutor innates or go to Newark and build a house for poor people. Fell- ow Ozians, my plea is for something much simpler, yet much more important than all that...”

For students on the brink of becoming alumni, this line seems especially relevant. The Wiz goes on, however, “I’m not going to lie and we’ll spare no expense. We will spare EVERY expense. The elevator will be un- godly slow. The lobby will have no books inside. That’ll save a few bucks.” As students, we know from experience exactly how com- patible this Amethyst City is to our own little campus on the Hill.

Greg McNamee as the Scarecrow, and Rob Hymas as the Wiz himself. I had the privilege of watching them on their roles night after night from the left side of the Ballroom. I was spotlight guy, for better or worse, despite the tremendous amount of people involved, none of them were as- signed to do it, and by showing up at the rehearsal, I became their best last hope. Watching the play, a 70s take on “The Wizard of Oz,” again and again, and hearing the cheery sexual innuendo and LSD references (“Why don’t you libri- cate my mind!”), I came to appre- ciate the performances of the leads, both in my mind and in the billing. Rob Hymas deserves special credit for his indomitable performance as the Wiz.

When asked what contributed most to the success of “The Wiz,” director Kim Gray summarized: “the Wiz in pageant form and sponsored by the Senior Class Gift Committee, puts many well-known Crusaders in an all-out, no-holds-barred com- petition to earn the title of Mr. Holy Cross.”

Last year’s first annual Mr. Holy Cross Pageant was a huge success, packing the ballroom and providing an entertaining evening, with some fans of Bockley’s “whichever it takes” to come away with the crown. In the end, Andrew Simons ’03 beat out the very in- tense competition to win the title. Simons’ success may lead to a series of many other person- alities from last year’s competition, will cer- tainly make this year’s event even more interesting.

The night is divided into five sections. The first portion is prepared to wow the panel of five judges in Formal Wear, Cos- tumes and Burger sans, Talent, and Question. Gradually, the panel of judges narrows the compe- tition down until this year’s winner is chosen. I know that most of many other person- alities from last year’s competition, will cer- tainly make this year’s event even more interesting.

Tickets to the event can be pur- chased in advance at the Hogan tables on Mar. 11-13 for six dollars, or for eight dollars the night of the pageant. For more information on the competition, visit the Holy Cross homepage and read about the Se- nior Class Gift effort. Only one man will emerge as Mr. Holy Cross. Find out who it will be on Mar. 14 at 9 p.m!"