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SHERIDAN - UTM STUDENTS TAKE TOP PRIZES IN UoFT DRAMA FESTIVAL -- AGAIN!

Students of the joint Sheridan-UTM Theatre and Drama Studies Program -- under the banner of the UTM Drama Club -- have again taken the major prizes in the U of T Drama Festival. The Festival took place during the past week in historic Hart House Theatre on the St. George campus of the University of Toronto, from February 15th to 18th. Four nights of completely original one-act plays representing a student body of more than 60,000 from multiple colleges on three campuses were entered in competition.

The festival Adjudicator this year was Joel Grothe, Head of the Performance Curriculum at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas (and a University of Toronto alumnus). Second-year student Brian Postalman was again The Drama Club Representative on the Festival Organizing Committee.

Eight of the fourteen awards were earned by three ambitious teams composed mostly of first and second-year students. Though most seniors are fully occupied in Theatre Erindale production at this point in the year, two were able to participate as playwrights, and three cast-members from Theatre Erindale's hit production of *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* – which closed at the end of January – were free to pitch in as actors.



Gevvy Sidhu's play *Twilight Soldier* – set in Berlin at the end of the Third Reich – won both an Award of Merit for Direction for Victor Pokinko, and the IATSE Award for Best Technical Achievement. The cast included Sidhu, Brenna Stewart, Jack Morton, Samuel Turner, and Roberto Esteves, while the stage manager was Kelsey Murphy and lighting was operated by Claire Kwiecien-Sherwood.

Marital conflict takes the stage in Andrew Di Rosa's *Days Like These*, when the visit of a mutual friend begins a spiral of lies and deception. The show captured both the Viewer's Choice Award for Saturday and an Award of Merit for Acting for Adam Cresswell. Natasha Ramondino directed, Alexandra Spyropoulos and Christian Tribuzio completed the cast, while the crew included Megan O'Kelly and Eliza Martin.

But the biggest winner was Kylah Thomson's introspective play *Trail of Embrace*, in which a woman attempts to reinvent herself as she takes a look at how memory and love intertwine. The seven-member ensemble (Madeleine Brown, Courtney Keir, Mark Palinski, Wesley Payne, Nicholas Potter, Mark Snetzko, and Evan Williams) together won the Hart House Theatre Award for Best Performance, while the show captured the Viewer's Choice Award for Thursday, and Thomson took the Robertson Davies Award for Playwriting. Kaitlyn Alexander directed, Nathaniel Rose designed the lights, and the entire team won the President's Award for Best Production.

Congratulations once again to all of the winners and participants! They keep the Sheridan-UTM Theatre and Drama Studies flag flying high in the world beyond our doorsteps.

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