

A revolutionary review of "The Revolutionists"

COLUMN BY
ELIJAH TEMPLETON

OPINION EDITOR

"Who are we without a story?" is the question at the heart of "The Revolutionists."

This A-State Theatre production is both hilarious and impactful, sure to have everyone in the audience laughing and more than a few holding back tears before the final curtain.

Set in Paris during the Reign of Terror, the show opens in the home of famous playwright Olympe De Gouges, who is struggling to find her voice.

De Gouges is visited by an old friend, Marianne Angelle, who looks to help her find it.

Angelle is a fictionalized character who represents the people of Haiti who were going through their own revolution against the French monarchy during this period.

De Gouges, played by Skyla Conger, and Angelle, played by Kylah Hood, play off of each other exceptionally well and represent the ever-present question of the show. They discuss the importance of the stories that people tell and how just because stories are fictional, that does not make them not real.

Charlotte Corday, played by Emily Provence, enters the stage next. Corday is a French aristocrat who is dead set on assassinating a journalist



(From left) Kylah Hood as Marianne Angelle, Emily Provence as Charlotte Corday, Skyla Conger as Olympe De Gouges and Abby Orr as Marie Antoinette in a rehearsal for "The Revolutionists."

PHOTO COURTESY OF CARLA WEHMEYER

named Marat and needs some last words from De Gouges.

Provence portrays Corday's desperate desire for change incredibly well and is a real stand out of the first act.

Provence embodies a woman who is tired of being powerless and will go to drastic measures to create the change she

believes needs to take place. The show never loses its comedic tone, even as the stakes continue to rise.

The main cast is rounded out by Marie Antoinette, played by Abby Orr, the former queen of France, who wants a chance to tell her own story rather than leave it in the

hands of those who despise her. Orr's performance served to humanize a well-known historical figure and made me sympathize with her and others in her position centuries after her death, showing the power of a great performance.

The interactions between these four distinct women set

the stage for some truly moving and meaningful conversations about sisterhood, legacy and the stories we leave behind.

Once the characters are introduced and fully involved in the narrative, the story becomes a frantic race to the finish line filled with high stakes drama. Hood's performance as

Angelle was a marvel and a true standout of the entire show, capturing the complex reality of being a woman of color in such a tumultuous time.

Angelle functions as a grounding force and an emotional anchor for the rest of the characters and Hood's performance highlights that fact to the fullest.

Seeing De Gouges struggle with writing a story that will mean something, Corday struggling to find the words to express her feelings and Antoinette so desperate to have her own voice heard really drove home the heart of the story; the legacies we leave behind.

The entire cast was phenomenal, with Orr and Hood bringing particularly fantastic performances to two drastically different characters.

This show will make you laugh throughout and then blindside you with incredibly beautiful sentiments when you least expect it, making it all the more impactful.

I highly recommend this show to anyone who loves comedy, drama and strong female characters, because there are plenty of each to be found.

There will be three more performances, April 19-20 at 7:30 p.m. and April 21 at 2:30 p.m. in the Simpson Theatre. A-State students can get in free with their student ID.
Official Score: 10/10

THIS WEEK'S POP PICK

ELIJAH TEMPLETON | OPINION EDITOR

"RIPLEY"

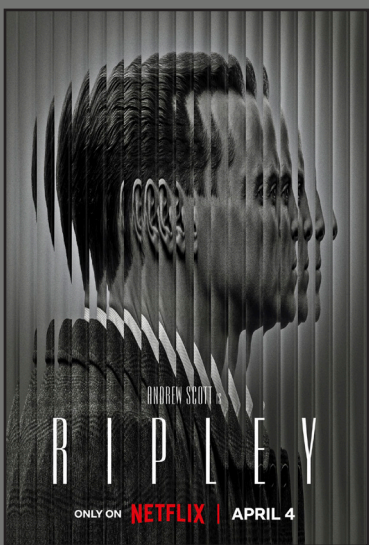


PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

Netflix's newest hit series "Ripley" from director and writer Steven Zaillian is a fantastic noir crime drama sure to delight and keep viewers on the edge of their seats throughout every episode.

Based on the 1955 novel "The Talented Mr. Ripley" by Patricia Highsmith, "Ripley" takes a different approach to the 1999 film adaptation starring Matt Damon in the titular role.

In this adaptation, Tom Ripley, played by the dynamic Andrew Scott, is a conman sought out by a wealthy father to track down his vagabond son Dickie Greenleaf, who has been gallivanting in Italy and convince him to come home.

Through his time with Dickie and his girlfriend Marge, Tom begins to dream of living a life like Dickie, a life of freedom and a lack of responsibilities, free of the monotony of a working class existence.

Set in the early 1960s, a change from the mid-'50s setting of the novel, the series is shot completely in black and white, serving to bring the focus onto the actors more than the colors and beauty of their surroundings.

The absolute standout performance of the series is Andrew Scott's portrayal of Tom Ripley, the grimy confident man who has made his fraudulent living through scams and deceit, mainly by pretending to be someone else.

Scott's performance is most impactful when he is not speaking at all, letting his facial expressions and his eyes tell the story of Tom's true feelings and motivations.

The black and white palette serves the ever-present sense of tension and dread between Tom and the people around him and keeps the audience with a constant feeling that something terrible is soon to occur.

Scott is in nearly every scene of the show and delivers an absolute masterclass in character work and presence as an actor.

This series is a true triumph for Scott and Zaillian in particular and stands out as one of the best new shows of the year.

Official Score: 9/10

Bradbury Art Museum celebrates Slow Art Day



Photo by Caroline Averitt | Life Editor

People viewing the "Panoply: 26 Painted Lives" exhibition at Bradbury Art Museum.

SHYE FISCHER

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

Bradbury Art Museum encouraged observers to take their time and understand artwork fully in honor of Slow Art Day. Participants were encouraged to pace themselves and find information to take away after viewing the titles.

"(Slow Art Day) is meant to give yourself the time to look and connect with the work," said Ann Prentice Wagner, director of the museum. "Maybe looking at a few pieces long and intensely and then come back later to think

about things in a different way. It is one of the great things about museums and galleries, being able to find more than maybe you thought you could." For visitors, there was a hand-out available with steps to guide them through the gallery in a more engaging way. The four steps were to describe the art, interpret its meaning, connect with it and evaluate the creation.

Slow Art Day focused on the exhibit titled "Panoply: 26 Painted Lives" with Ray Allen Parker being the artist of all pieces. Upon the walls are twenty-six oil

on canvas portraits, each representing a different person in a greatly realistic manner.

Kennedy Landry, a junior graphic design major and museum assistant, said she appreciated Parker's representation of people of color. She said she particularly liked his Maya Angelou portrait in the exhibit.

"I am just happy to see someone in art that takes from everyone instead of being mainstream," she said. "He likes all sorts of things. Some of these people I have not seen before and maybe if you look them up, you may learn something new."

Life

ARAB HERITAGE AT A-STATE



PHOTO COURTESY OF SALMA ABDEL-KARIM

Salma Abdel-Karim



PHOTO COURTESY OF IBRAHIM AL ELAMAT

(From left) Ibrahim Al Elamat and his brother Ahmad Al Elamat

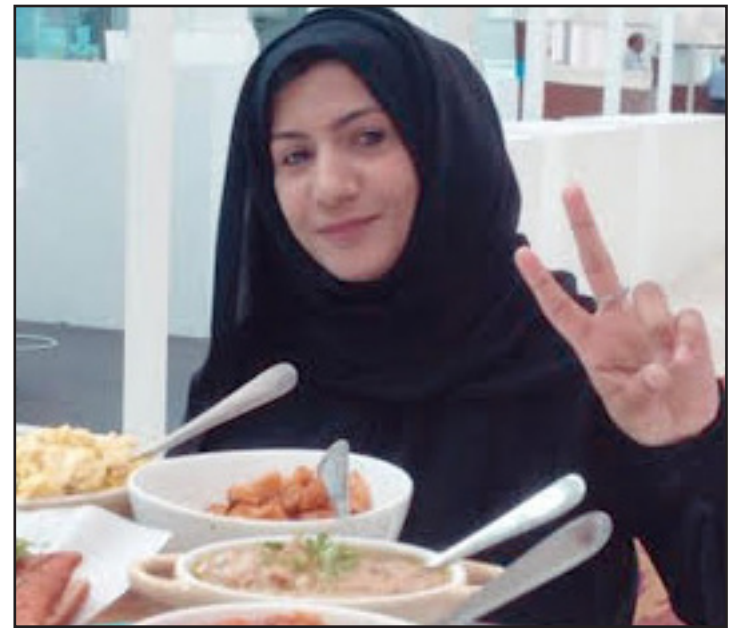


PHOTO COURTESY OF MONA ALQADHI

Mona Alqadhi

CAROLINE AVERITT

LIFE EDITOR

LAILA CASIANO

SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

President Joe Biden declared April as National Arab American Heritage Month in 2021. There are nearly four million Arab Americans, people from Arabic-speaking countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and just over 6,000 live in Arkansas.

“Being a Palestinian and Jordanian Arab Muslim woman is one of the things I cherish the most,” Salma Abdel-Karim said.

“This month gives me great joy knowing that Arab Americans all around the United States can be celebrated for their culture and heritage,” Salma Abdel-Karim said. “It makes me happy knowing that an identity that I hold so dear to my heart can be recognized

and celebrated nationally so that more people can understand the true meaning of what it means to be an Arab.”

Salma Abdel-Karim

Abdel-Karim, a sophomore pre-professional chemistry and biology double major from Jonesboro, is A-State’s vice president of the Muslim Student Association (MSA). In this role, she leads the organization of an annual Ramadan Dinner, which she said is for anyone who wants to learn more about Ramadan

and enjoy good food. She also plans to organize an Arabic Conversation Roundtable for students who are learning Arabic on campus. However, she said she would like to see more celebrations of Arab American Heritage Month on campus and has an idea

of what that could look like. “At this event, we could have a speaker who talks

“Stereotypes are effectively countered by highlighting the diversity of Arab culture and highlighting its rich history, art, and contributions to humanity,” Ibrahim Al Elamat said.

about typical Arab customs and traditions. I think an event like this would allow for more people at A-State to learn and understand Arab culture,” Abdel-Karim said. “In addition, we could have several traditional Middle Eastern dishes and desserts for people to try. The food aspect is important because anytime there’s food at an event, more people tend to come.”

She said she loves to talk about her culture and religion and wishes more people would ask her about it. Having more events like this on campus would give her that opportunity, she said.

“Being a Palestinian and Jordanian Arab Muslim woman is one of the things

I cherish the most,” Abdel-Karim said. “I encountered a few instances of discrimination but became more resilient as a result of those. This identity has empowered me, and it is something that I will forever be grateful for.”

Ibrahim Al Elamat

Ibrahim Al Elamat, a doctoral student studying heritage studies from Jordan, said his experience as an Arab student at A-State significantly shaped his understanding of cultural identity and belonging.

“Interacting with a diverse student body has exposed me to various perspectives, traditions, and values, enriching my appreciation for cultural diversity,” Al Elamat said. “Through these interactions, I’ve developed a sense of belonging in a multicultural setting by learning how to negotiate cultural differences and discover common ground.”

Al Elamat, who serves as president of the MSA, said he experienced a profound sense of solidarity and belonging among the Arab community at A-State. He said celebrating history and significant contributions made by Arab Americans created an exchange of cultural ideas, personal stories and built relationships. “The existence of cultural groups and Arab student

organizations created a supportive atmosphere that strengthened the bonds of friendship and support within our community,” Al Elamat said.

An obstacle Al Elamat faced was addressing stereotypes and adjusting to a new language and cultural setting. This presented difficulties regarding communication and academic achievement, but with time, he overcame those obstacles and found a sense of belonging within the campus community.

“It’s important to address these by organizing cultural events, open discussions, and sharing personal stories to dispel myths and foster understanding. Stereotypes are effectively countered by highlighting the diversity of Arab culture and highlighting its rich history, art, and contributions to humanity,” Al Elamat said.

“The students that I have met are very friendly, smile, help me if I ask them any questions. But I have noticed that the different cultural groups don’t really mix,” Mona Alqadhi said.

Mona Alqadhi

Mona Alqadhi, a graduate assistant teaching the Arabic language from Bahrain, said during April, Arab people have the opportunity to share their culture, history, food, clothes, dances, music and more.

“These celebrations promote respect, understanding, acceptance and not letting anything divide Americans with fear and hatred,” Alqadhi said.

Alqadhi said observing Ramadan is an important part of her culture and religion. Since moving to the United States, Alqadhi said

practicing Ramadan has been different since she’s been away from her immediate family, but she continues to celebrate with the Muslim community in the area.

“It is part of our culture for our families to gather on Fridays. We eat together, talk, drink tea and spend time with our extended family. Family is centered in our culture,” Alqadhi said.

Alqadhi said she participated in a culture fair in Washington, D.C., where various groups related to each county were showcased. She said doing something similar at A-State would be a great example of how people can learn about different cultures, especially during National Arab American Heritage Month.

“There are many countries that fall under the heading of Arab and it would be nice to have something that

shows the unique things about each country like clothes, music, dance, dialects and food,” Alqadhi said.

Alqadhi said she is proud of her culture and is very thankful for the opportunity to teach the Arabic language at A-State.

“The students that I have met are very friendly, smile, help me if I ask them any questions. But I have noticed that the different cultural groups don’t really mix,” Alqadhi said. “I hope more American students will learn about the Arabic culture and learn the Arabic language.”



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF EMERALD ESTATE

A map showing the Arab countries