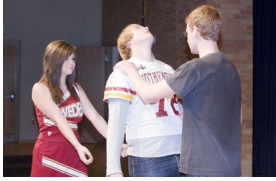


One act is psychological thriller

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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GHS actors take 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' on stage.

Thespians who signed up for the one-act this fall at Gothenburg High School didn't know the play they'd perform would be so sinister.

But they're not complaining.

In fact, they seem to like acting out the adaption from Robert Louis Stevenson's novella Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

"It's a little creepier than what we've acted in past years," said Ryan Ostendorf who plays Mr. Edward Hyde 3 in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

A synopsis of the play describes it as one of depravity, lust, love and horror that take place on the fog-bound streets of Victorian-era London.

While experimenting with exotic "powders and tinctures," Dr. Henry Jekyll brings forth his other self who is Edward Hyde.

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Villain Hyde is released to commit sins Jekyll is too civilized to comprehend.

Ostendorf said his character is one of the darker ones on stage.

“It’s an experience where I can grow as an actor,” he said.

The character and Ostendorf’s interpretation of Mr. Hyde paid off Friday when the high school junior received a best supporting actor award during competition at Loup City.

Noted performers in the division were Sonie Kuhlman, Brennan Costello, Josh Clark and Carson Messersmith.

Ostendorf and the rest of the cast received a third-place award for their performance.

MacKenzie Brand, who plays a towns person, said she likes that the play is serious and challenges the cast.

“It’s all going on in Jekyll’s mind,” she explained, “and it’s hard to portray what’s going on in his mind.”

Sonie Kuhlman, who plays Mr. Edward Hyde 2, likes her character because he’s creepy and she’s used to playing friendly characters such as Becky Thatcher in “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.”

Josh Clark, who depicts Dr. Henry Jekyll, said he loves the fact that “we’re tackling something that Gothenburg has never done before.”

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About his character, Clark said Jekyll has a fantastic mind even though he's a fictional character.

"It's also fantastic how complex it gets," he added.

Clark said there are many new faces on stage.

"But everyone has pulled together fantastically," he said.

Director Lori Long agreed, noting that sometimes many young actors can be unpredictable.

"But not this group," she said. "They all want to learn, they're engaged and are working hard."

Long selected Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde the day after district one-act competition last year.

"I tried to look at something with literary value that was very different than anything else we've done," Long said.

Plus, she said last year students performed Epic Proportions which was a comedy.

"We wanted to contrast that."

Performing a psychological piece this year is challenging for the actors in addition to a combat scene where Mr. Hyde 3 (Brennan Costello) attacks Sir Danvers Carew (Jeramie VanAcker).

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Students traveled to Lincoln Saturday where they received combat training from

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