



Spring Lake Park High School senior Cassidy Thompson (Eros) stars in Spring Lake Park High School's one-act production of "Four Baboons Adoring the Sun." The play is competing in the Minnesota State One-Act Competition. Sneak previews were performed on Jan. 18, above, and Jan. 19 at the high school. Photo by Paige Kieffer

SLP High School enters one-act play in state competition

By Paige Kieffer
Staff Writer

Nineteen Spring Lake Park High School students took on a unique challenge this year by entering a production of "Four Baboons Adoring the Sun" by John Guare in the Minnesota State One-Act Competition.

The cast and crew was scheduled to complete their preliminary round for Section 4AA of the competition at Stillwater High School Jan. 24, after the Blaine/Spring Lake Park Life went to press.

The annual Minnesota State One-Act Competition is where 315 high schools, making up 311 teams, compete by performing a one-act play that is no more than 35 minutes long.

"The one-act allows us to have more concentrated effort on each moment of the show," said Spring Lake Park theater director Kevin Dutcher. "As it is so short, we are able to pay more attention to detail. Every moment is worked through because of the length of the show, and this challenges and places more responsibility on the actors."

This year, 12 actors and



Ethan Strawn (Phillip McKenzie) and Anna Hutton (Penny McKenzie) perform in "Four Baboons Adoring the Sun."

Photo by Paige Kieffer

actresses and seven crew members from Spring Lake Park High School are participating in the competition. The finals for their section will be Thursday, Jan. 31, at Stillwater

High School, 5701 Stillwater Blvd. N., Oak Park Heights. The state tournament will be Thursday, Feb. 7, and Friday, Feb. 8, at the O'Shaughnessy performing arts venue at St. Catherine's

University, 2004 Randolph Ave., St. Paul.

All performances at the various competitions are open to the public.

Dutcher chose to perform Guare's "Four Ba-

boons Adoring the Sun" at this year's one-act competition.

"I love the author," he said. "I think he writes really interesting work that challenges the actors and

the audience."

The play "Four Baboons Adoring the Sun" is about suburban housewife named Penny McKenzie (Anna Hutton) who leaves her husband for an old college boyfriend Phillip McKenzie (Ethan Strawn) and they marry.

They decide to take their nine children on a trip to an archaeological dig in Sicily, where life turns out not to be quite as idyllic as Penny had hoped.

The cast also includes Cassidy Thompson (Eros), Mason Payne (Wayne), Cameron Hunter (Lyle), Bronwyn Simmons (Sarah), Maty Mayaan (Teddy), Maelea Tan (Halcy), Abbi Tanner (Jane), Andrew Kaliher (Peter), Menal Abdella (Robin) and Cassie Christian (Rachel).

"I love participating in the one-act competition," said senior Cassidy Thompson. "It's like a theatrical sprint. You have 35 minutes to get all your lines, your blocking and everything across, and that's all you have. Once you step onto that stage, it's go time, and if you mess up you mess up."

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