

'Nijinsky' handles tough subject with understanding and respect

FALL RIVER — The titles of some plays let us toy with what the story may be about. *Nijinsky Choked His Chicken* is not one of those plays.

It is the second part of *La Puta Vida* ("this bitch of a life"), a trilogy by Hispanic playwright, Reinaldo Povod. *South of Tomorrow* and *Papa Dio* are the other components.

Povod writes about the dark side of humanity in a style more direct than a fired bullet. His topics, his people, his settings are not pretty because poverty, abuse and deprivation are not pretty. As one young viewer said, "He doesn't sugar coat anything."

The one-act play was the most recent offering by the Bristol Community College Theatre Repertory Student Workshops, where the goal is not to produce a necessarily polished work, but to explore and ex-



ARTS REVIEW

Lorraine Lucciola

periment, often with bold and controversial scripts. The productions are entirely student produced, encouraging participation in playwrighting, directing and technical production, as well as acting.

Andrea Bullard directed and choreographed the opening dance piece, *Pox*, an effective statement about racism.

Kelly Bucher directed *Nijinsky*. Her program statement read, "... it is about the sexual desires and animal instincts that live in all of us."

Extreme language and graphic

action introduce us to Raisin (Joe Pereira), a young boy discovering need and gratification for the first time and Chino (Scott Stets), older, wired and casual about his preference for young men.

Chino prides himself on his street wisdom and defines his own *machismo*: "I deliver. I don't receive." He lives on the edge of danger and physical abuse, as do most of Povod's characters.

Stets took another leap in character portrayal. He delivers good, serious work and is in a focused and solid place as a performer. Pereira, as Raisin, brought believable childhood innocence to the role. We accepted his immature notion of his own sexuality as shameful and dirty. Yet, when he realizes what Chino is proposing, Raisin seems suddenly wise in his innocence, versus Chino, who is mired in his worldly ignorance.

Kelly Bucher's direction was mature, sensitive and hard-hitting. Stets, Pereira and Bucher were in agreement that the piece depicted, in Stets' words, "a piece of a life of a type of people", but that sexual desire and the need and search for gratification exists in everyone — including *Nijinsky*. Raisin informs Chino that if sex was okay for the ballet legend, *Nijinsky*, it must be okay for him, too. To this Chino replies, "If he was such a great dancer, how come I never saw him on 'Soul Train', huh?"

The play doesn't condone child molestation but does show "a piece" of its' characters actions and choices. It pits innocence against ignorance, spawned by an unchanging culture, environment and ethnic lifestyle.

Nijinsky's cast and crew approached the project with an understanding and respect for the work, each other and for those viewing it.

Bay State colleges

Physics symposium

A symposium on current physics will be held by the UMass-Dartmouth Department of Physics on Saturday in honor of Prof. Joseph Sauro's 27-year career as a physics teacher.

The all-day program in room 305, Science and Engineering, features UMD faculty and guest faculty. Organized by Prof. J.P. Hsu, the symposium is sponsored by the UMass-Dartmouth Foundation, the Alumni Association, and the Physics Department.

All are welcome.

Photography exhibit

The 1992 UMass-Dartmouth senior photography exhibition "XIV Exposures" will run through May 28 at the Greater Fall River Art Association, 80 Belmont St., Fall River.

Gallery hours are 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. For more information, call 673-2712.

ored at the College's Commencement ceremony on Sunday, May 31, at 2 p.m.

The award, the highest honor conferred by the Bristol Community College, recognizes an outstanding citizen of Bristol County whose character and achievements have enriched the lives of the community, or an individual who has made distinguished contributions in the fields of health, education, business, industry, labor, government or arts.

Menard represents the Fifth Bristol District, including Somerset, Dighton, and parts of Taunton and Swansea. Elected to the House in 1978, she was appointed Majority Whip in 1992. She serves as House Speaker Flaherty's appointment to the Governor's Child Care Task Force reviewing child care policy, and works with the Office for Children to develop regulations to supplement a new child care law, which she sponsored. The law cut red tape and served to encourage the availability of child care in Massachusetts. She also secured

Births

Fall River