

'Cat' is hot, hot, hot, fall debut

By LaNae Riviere

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Carlos Morales is thrown to the ground by a raging older man. His feet propel over his falling body at a 90-degree angle and his drink precedes his landing with a resounding "thunk."

"You're gonna sit down and listen to me boy," the elder man promises in a throaty southern drawl that is entirely in character. The audience gasps collectively at the sudden display of violence.

Of course, this isn't just your average examination of familial dysfunction — this is Tennessee Williams. The DBCC Theater Department breathes new life into the Williams' classic "Cat On a Hot Tin Roof," with a sterling cast that exceeds expectations. As in any Williams piece, the underlying tensions between each character are reflected in his carefully constructed dialogue.

When Brick sets a steely glare on Maggie in Act I and warns, "You're on very dangerous ground," we believe him but are dying to know why. Brick and Maggie are a married couple visiting Brick's father, Big Daddy, for his 65th birthday.

Tiffany Green shines as Maggie the Cat. She perfectly embodies the frantic yearning of a woman whose husband has sworn off her intimate advances, in favor of a life in pursuit of alcoholic oblivion. She chatters, cajoles and nitpicks, as well as Liz Taylor herself whom made the role infamous in the late 1950s. We can't decide if Maggie's an object to be pitied or outright loathed, yet this is precisely why the role is so memorable.

Williams understood the human condition or more aptly, the fascination with its darker nature. In "Cat On a Hot Tin Roof," the personalities of each character are all deeply flawed. In Maggie's case, she's a woman desperately trying to save a marriage gone cold while Brick is steadily drinking himself to death over a questionable relationship with a deceased friend.

"The characters are so real. I mean they're dealing with some pretty serious issues. I think it's great that the school is promoting plays like these. I was surprised at how good the actors were, especially the guy that played Big Daddy. He was unreal," said Tanya Martel, A DBCC interior design student of the impassioned second act.

In Act II we are introduced to Robert Arcuri as Brick's ailing father, Big Daddy. As for stellar performances, Arcuri is definitely deserving of the title. He approaches the role with all the swagger and mischievousness expected of a proper Big Daddy and then raises the bar with booming voice and uncompromising loyalty to the script.

When he shouts, the audience quivers. His lines are delivered with unwavering timeliness and accuracy, almost as if his words are being dealt like blows from a hammer. The audience loves him, fears him and can't seem to get enough of him. Arcuri's performance in Act II was most certainly the highlight of the evening. A standing ovation seemed a lame reward



Jerry Englehart Jr./ In Motion

Carlos Morales (Brick), center, talks to Tiffany Green (Maggie), right, about crowd reaction to the first act of 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,' while Robert Arcuri (Big Daddy) waits to go on stage.

Without the steady pacing of Carlos Morales as Brick, however, Big Daddy's fire wouldn't have had a counterpart. Morales plays Brick to the hilt. Indifferent, casual and wholeheartedly tired of his life in general, Morales captures these aspects flawlessly.

"The guy was good. He didn't miss a line, his accent was impressive and when he fell to the floor during the fight with Big Daddy," said Ryan Lippan of Morales' performance. "He made me forget I was watching a play. He didn't break character once."

With admirable performances deliv-

Tracy Chiriboga as Big Mama, Paul Carbone as Brother Man (Gooper), a positively devilish performance by Megan Beachy as Sister Woman (Mae), Cory Hoffman as the reluctant Doctor Baugh and Carl Derks as the humorous Reverend Tooker; the production of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof won over the audience with aplomb.

The students of DBCC are well-rewarded by their theater department. Theater Director David Peshek made Cat on a Hot Tin Roof a first-rate production, owing to fine direction and excellent casting decisions. His next project at