

# features

## APO takes on an annual adventure *How a senior project turned into a bigger movement for theater*

**KAITLYN MOORE**  
@AUCollegian

It all starts with a vision. Well, normally it would. Shakespeare was just a man with a talent for language and a strong imagination, right?

The idea of this theater escapade is to go in completely blind, starting from scratch.

Last year, Megan Harvey found her senior project. She was going to write, cast, design, produce and show a play: all in 24 hours.

No Shoelaces Allowed was a one act play about Daniel (played by Matt Mayer) – a young man in a psychiatric facility – and the disorder he battled, the people he encountered and the situations he got into.

Quite a bit more goes into a theater production than most would think. Harvey found plenty of support from her fellow thespians and other non-theater students and managed to pull it off. In fact, it went so well the theater honorary, Alpha Phi Omega, decided the 24 hour play should stay.

Naomi Sims, a liaison for APO, met Harvey during AU’s productions of Midsummer Night’s Dream and Trojan Women. Sims acted in both performances under Harvey’s stage manager wing, and when Harvey announced her senior project idea, Sims went to the interest meeting and decided to volunteer her time to the cause.

“I didn’t do theater in high school,” Sims said. “My background is in film and television – my parents own Fusion Productions.”

Sims is a double major in political science and creative writing, and a double minor in English and



SAGE HAINES

**No Shoelaces Allowed rehearsal: actors worked on memorization and determined that they were doing during this scene.**

helping her friend with the 24 hour theater project brought her to producing this year’s project.

“Megan had it planned out very well, and that combined with the materials and groundwork, watching Megan do all of it, and my own film and production experience...I want it to be good,” Sims said. “We want to have something to show at the end of the 24 hours.”

Last year, she was assistant producer to Harvey and stayed up all night with the playwrights creating and editing the script. During the entire 24 hours, she only slept for 30 minutes. Harvey did not sleep at all. However, most of the other volunteers got a few hours of shut eye.

“Twenty-four hours doesn’t mean you get no sleep at all,” Sims said. “We work as a team to get this all done.”

Once the script is finalized, the

major, has been in theater since she was in eighth grade. Her most recent performance was a quirky and spontaneous little bird in Seussical. While she enjoys acting, she prefers to work with her hands as the head of Scenic.

“I designed and built the play area and stage, visual things like set dressings, props and other pieces,” Rickard said of last year’s project. “It’s a great feat and it’s something to be proud of. Writing a show in the first six hours, putting it together, making costumes and blocking...it’s crazy and fantastic. It’s awesome to say ‘I did this’.”

Creating a play from thin air is not without its challenges. A few volunteers, like Nik Demers and Drew Berlin (junior and senior theater majors) had more than one role, and since it was their first time doing anything like this, nobody had a clue what would happen.

“I was an actor and the costume head. It was hard to multitask while being in the middle of a 12 hour rehearsal,” Demers said.

A few people depended on the go-ahead from Demers, like Berlin, who was on the costume team. Costume worked with the playwrights and actors closely to develop their dress, so when the man in charge also happens to be an actor, things can get a little sticky.

we will do this time,” Demers said.

Students who are not involved in theater can get involved with

dent of the student senate and I have my honors capstone to work on this year too. I have to keep a



SAGE HAINES

**No Shoelaces Allowed stage: Maya Rickard’s design was very abstract and played with doors, frames and clocks.**



SAGE HAINES

**No Shoelaces Allowed auditions: actors prepared a one minute monologue or told a story to directing head Jake Riley.**

philosophy. Although she did not pursue theater until her first year at AU, she did grow up with a love and appreciation for the art. Her parents both majored in theater and they often went to see plays as a family.

Her acting experience, knowledge with film and production and

playwrights, the producer and director hold auditions. Then, the actors start going over lines, rehearsing and blocking, while the other team members design and build the set, design the visuals, audio, lights, costume, props and more.

Maya Rickard, senior theater

hospitality. While the project does have a small budget, it is mostly for food.

Depriving the body of sleep for long periods of time can have adverse affects on a person if it is not replaced by something else. Nutritional food helps a lot and “people usually make food and bring it in for us to eat,” Berlin said.

Organizing a 24 hour theater project can be stressful, so Sims is relieved this is happening early in the semester.

“The writing team sits down on the 28th and the performance is the 29th. It’s going to be the 5th weekend of classes. I am the presi-

very strict calendar and carve out time to do these things,” Sims said.

The officers of APO and Dr. Durbin-Ames have been very supportive during this process, and there is a team of people involved in last year’s project who collectively know what needs to be done.

“It was a really fun experience and it was a lot of work. It was challenging. I am excited to do it again,” Sims said.

The 24 hour theater project will be at 7:30 p.m. September 29 in the studio theater. Due to limited seating, tickets are required but can be secured for free at the box office.



SAGE HAINES

**No Shoelaces Allowed cast and crew: everyone enjoyed themselves during their breaks while getting their energy back from good food.**