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Vagina Monologues

Taylor Nicholson

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URI professor offers insight from frontlines of Kiev

LU FARRELLY
Editor

The University of Rhode Island has an inside source of information to the revolution currently going on in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev. Professor of political science Olai Petro offered firsthand insight from Ukraine on the overthrow of the Ukrainian government this past week.

Petro, who specializes in Russian affairs, is currently on sabbatical leave in Ukraine as a Fulbright Research Scholar at Odessa’s I.I. Mechnikov National University. He described via email interview the events and atmosphere in Kiev.

What started as a peaceful protest when violence between police and protesters left as many as 100 people dead and hundreds injured in Kiev’s Independence Square. This decision to delay by Ukraine’s former President Victor Yanukovych was heavily influenced by pressure from Russia.

“Any revolt has many authors, some of whom were probably on the other side before,” Petro said. “In this event, events were set in motion by genuine civic frustration with the government’s decision to delay the signing of the EU Association Agreement. This was then seized upon by the parliament’s opposition parties, who pressed the government for further concessions. Finally, it was actually driver’s seat.”

Yanukovych has since fled Kiev and on Feb. 20, was stripped of his power by an incomplete group of members of parliament. Parliament, encouraged by the Ukrainian nationalist party Svoboda, initially granted expanded powers to its new speaker, Oleksandr V. Turchynov, who is acting as president of Ukraine. On Wednesday night, lawmakers announced an interim government led by Arseniy P. Yatsenyuk, who will serve as prime minister.

“I would describe what happened last week as a textbook coup d’etat,” Petro said. “You see, under the acting constitution the president may resign or be impeached, but only after a review of the
**New “Robocop” remake stands alone, flounders**

**by Augie King**
Entertainment Editor

Not only is the original “Robocop” film a touchstone of 1980s action cinema, but it is also a slyly subversive work of corporate satire that arguably resonates more today than it did upon its release. Luckily, the people behind the new remake seemed to realize that they wouldn’t be able to recapture lightning in a bottle. Instead, they reconfigured familiar elements to fit an entirely new setup that would stand apart from the original. Unfortunately, the intriguing new setup became beholden to a mediocre and uninspired execution.

The basic story points remain the same: cop gets severely injured in a gangland revenge, corporation working with the military creates new cybernetic technology and cop and technology are fused to create Robocop. Where the remake differs is how it uses the original’s satirical jabs as a jumping-off point for updated social commentary.

The dangers of drone warfare are the primary focus it’s conceived in such a jumbled and plodding fashion, that isn’t the case.

The real fatal flaw of this “Robocop” is the lack of an emotional connection, much of which is attributed to the lead performance of Joel Kinnaman (of AMC’s now-cancelled “The Killing”). There’s never a point where the audience is able to endear to Kinnaman as Alex Murphy prior to turning metal and any chemistry with his onscreen wife (played by Abbie Cornish) is nonexistent.

Cornish and co-star Gary Oldman, playing the sympathetic scientist behind Murphy’s recovery, are able to project genuine emotion even as they fight against being in a film as cold as this one. An early scene, in which the totality of Murphy’s condition is revealed to him, is the lone exception to this, which provides a poignant shock that is surprisingly graphic for the PG-13 rating.

Unfortunately, the film can’t sustain that interest, as it gets lost in a sea of underdeveloped subplots. Even Michael Keaton’s always-watchable eccentricity can’t

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**Vagina Monologues mixes laughs, candor**

**by Taylor Nicholson**
Contributing Entertainment Writer

Last Thursday night, under the direction of Kelly Cambrola, “The Vagina Monologues,” an episodic play of womanly positions, got down and dirty with the University of Rhode Island’s Kingston campus in celebration of... URI’s 2014 VDAY.

Not surprisingly, the event, which drew a primarily female audience, made Edwards Auditorium shake with unbridled laughter and at times, pensive silence. The delightfully diverse cast broke down stigmas and opened a door that is usually slammed, locked and welded shut; all by telling the true tales and spilling the secrets of women of all ages, races and sexualities. The roughly two-hour-long show played like an adult-version of a child’s sleepover party; full of excitement, giggles and sometimes, raunchiness.

It should be noted that all proceeds of the productions went to the service provider, Day One. From the program: “(Day One’s) mission is to reduce the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence, and to support and advocate for those affected by it.”

It was evident that the tone of the evening, although serious at times, was generally light and frank. Upon walking into the auditorium, one was called over to purchase “goodies,” cookies and treats that displayed designs of the feminine mystique. The 20 cast members each had a hand in some part of the individual stories told via note-cards, which often treading comical.

These included “The Flood,” in which Cambrola donned an old woman’s accent and relayed early sexual frustrations, and “Because He Liked to Look at It,” where Rachel Simon, along with a very talented male audience member, depicted the story of a woman’s struggle accepting her own bits and pieces. There was also “The Woman Who Loved to Make Vagina’s Happy,” performed by Emily Goupil, which involved a plethora of loud noises and jerking movements followed by uproarious laughter from the crowd.

But the night also became somber with tales such as “My Vagina Was My Village,” by Caitlin Nickerson, and the closing two “Spotlight” acts featuring Simon and Anna Russell. Each of these stories conveyed strong emotions along with dramatic imagery. Speakers were shaking with zeal and rawness.

The final story, which served as an almost call to arms to those in attendance, lead the packed auditorium to their feet, applauding in support. As one who had never considered the potential of recognizing such a “hush-hush” topic, the evening’s performance was a nice reminder that there are people out there that are passionate and willing to dedicate themselves to equality.

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**Senior jazz pianist performs recital**

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