

ADVERTISEMENT

tradition.
Start a new one right here.

SCHEDULES
PHOTOS & VIDEOS
NEWS SCORES & STATS

LSJ.com

POWERED BY **H** [HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS.NET](#)

E-mail it

Print it

Get E-headlines

Get RSS feeds

Published September 11, 2008

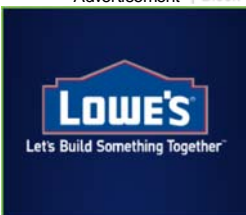
BoarsHead's opener will challenge its audiences

Bridgette Redman | **For the Lansing State Journal**

As Thomas Gibbons' "Permanent Collection" played out on the BoarsHead stage, faint echoes sounded from last season's "Doubt."

Once again, a world emerged with no easy solutions to highly charged, emotional issues. Two highly intelligent, driven individuals clashed over their convictions. Solutions are left for the audience to ponder long after the final bow.

Again, BoarsHead's opener, directed this year by Kristine Thatcher, was intense, passionate and perfectly staged.

Advertisement Block

EVERYDAY
LOW
PRICES
GUARANTEED*

Shop now ▶

* SEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Alan Bomar Jones (playing the newly appointed foundation director Sterling North) and Michael Joseph Mitchell (playing Paul Barrow, the long-term education director) clash over the management of an extensive art collection governed by the will of its eccentric late owner. Gary Houston's portrayal of the late collector's ghost is the perfect clown in high Shakespearean tradition, providing comic relief as the heroes take their tragic plummet, all while slyly singing a subtle wisdom.

Jones and Mitchell portray unbending conviction with equal amounts of charisma and obliviousness. Both stampede with a fervor blinding them to empathy, even as Sterling's assistant Kanika (Monica Sanders) and Gillian, the reporter (Dana Brazil), seek a middle ground that gets beyond preconceptions and paranoia.

The play is perfectly paced, with actors presenting characters deeper than merely represented ideas, but likeable people with flaws and passions. They transport the audience into the lives of these driven people who are all trying to make their world a better place.

During the journey, they raise questions about the guilt and stigma of racism, the frustration of being held back, the desire to get beyond old angers, and the ability of art to make individuals something more than what they are.

Kirk Domer's set is thematically perfect, repeating the playwright's questions about our ability to make ourselves better than we are. Large picture frames form a wall with some containing the artwork described and others a gray blank, challenging the audience to see beyond the data collected by their eyes.

"Permanent Collection" should be seen multiple times - preferably with a companion so that post-show can be spent wrestling with the play's questions.

[Enlarge photo](#)


(Trumple Photography)

It's a talker: Sterling North (Alan Bomar Jones, left) and Paul Barrow (Michael Joseph Mitchell) look over a piece of African art while Alfred Morris (Gary Houston) observes in "Permanent Collection," onstage at the BoarsHead Theater through Sept. 28.

'Permanent' fixture

- The play: "Permanent Collection"
- The venue: BoarsHead Theater, 425 S. Grand Ave., downtown
- The performances: 7 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays (and Sept. 18), through Sept. 28
- The tickets: \$12-\$30 at 484-7805 or www.boarshead.org