



Thank you very much for attending our performance of Euripides' play. We hope you enjoyed it!

- Honors Greek Tragedy S '08

# The Alcestis

A Tragedy(?) by Euripides

Performance by

The members of the  
Honors Greek Tragedy  
Class

April 15, 2008

7:30 p.m.

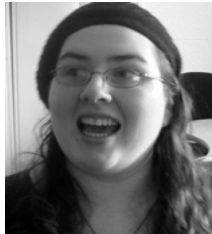
Romita Auditorium

## Cast/Crew



Alexandria Bignall is an Honors Junior in the School of Arts and Sciences. She is a double major in Psychology and Women's Studies. She is from the Bronx, and enjoys reading, writing, and watching television. Upon graduation from CNR she hopes to spend a few months abroad, then attend Graduate School in Psychology. (*Hercules, Chorus, Costumes*)

Erin is an Honors Junior in the School of Arts of Sciences. She is a double major in Classics and English. She hopes to attend Graduate School for a degree in English. She calls Boston home, and spends a lot of her time reading the new love of her life - Virginia Woolf. (*Servant, Chorus, Director*)



Mary Henderson is a Religious Studies major in the Honors class of 2011. After graduation she might like to continue her education, but she's open to different possibilities and willing to play the cards dealt to her. When not studying religion, Mary likes to read and create things with duct tape (she went to her high school senior prom fully decked out in a duct tape dress). (*Apollo, Chorus, Masks*)

Sarah Hnath is an Honors Junior major in Biology who studied ancient Greek with Erin and Dr. Raia. Her hometown is Stratford, Connecticut; she is currently a personal fitness trainer. Her aspiration is to become a physical therapist. (*Alcestis, Chorus, Script*)



Ashley Melendez is an Honors Sophomore in the School of Arts and Sciences. She is a double major in Biology and Environmental Studies. (*Pheres, Chorus, Script*)

Darianna Parra is an Honors freshman in the School of Arts and Sciences. She is majoring in Communication Arts and minoring in Business. Darianna is a member of many groups including CNR Drama and LAWS. Darianna has appeared in productions such as *The Sound of Music*, *West Side Story*, and *Sweet Charity*. She is excited to be in a Greek tragedy and hopes the performance will be a success. (*Admetus, Chorus, Costume*)



Kathy Yoon is an Honors Junior majoring in International Studies and minoring in Philosophy. She is from Seoul, South Korea. Kathy is involved in various campus activities including Model UN and Tatler. In her free time she enjoys traveling and learning about various cultures. This is her second production in Dr. Raia's class – her first was in Plautus' *Rudens* in Comic Spirit (Spring '07). (*Death, Eumelus, Chorus, Playbill and Advertising*)

Dr. Ann Raia teaches classics at CNR (1964-Present), directed the Honors Program (1974-2001), and is an enthusiastic supporter of using computer technology for the study of Latin, Greek, and classical civilization (see her homepage @ <http://www.cnr.edu/home/araia>). (*Instructor*)



## Setting of the Play

The play opens in Pherae, Thessaly, before the house of Admetus. The front door of the palace is in the center of the backdrop.

## Exodos

### Choral tag in Greek: Erin Daley and Sarah Hnath

Chorus: Spirits have many shapes,  
Many strange things are performed by the Gods,  
The expected does not always happen,  
And God makes a way for the unexpected.  
So ends this action.

## About the Author and Play

Euripides (c. 480-406 B.C.E.) was one of the three great tragedians of 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens, along with Aeschylus and Sophocles. He wrote about 90 plays, yet only 18 survived. Although his plays are frequently based on the exploits of heroes, his works re-shaped Attic tragedy through their skeptical tone, emphasis on character motivation and strong women. The *Alcestis*, one of the earliest of Euripides' surviving plays, was produced in 438 B.C.E. at the Great City Dionysia; Euripides won second place in the competition, losing to Sophocles.

The *Alcestis* presents the following myth: Admetus, the King of Pherae in Thessaly (northern Greece), married Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, the King of Iolcus (mainland Greece). On their wedding day, Admetus offended the goddess Artemis and was condemned to an early death. Apollo, indebted to Admetus for an earlier kindness, intervened with the Fates and obtained a promise from them that at Admetus' appointed time of death they would accept a substitute. The play opens as Admetus' time of death arrives and he still has not found anyone to die for him. His father Pheres is unwilling and finds it absurd that he should be asked to give up his enjoyable life for his son. It is Alcestis, his devoted wife, who agrees to be taken in his stead, giving as her reasons that she does not wish to leave her children fatherless or live as a widow.

The *Alcestis* sometimes is characterized as a satyr play and sometimes as a melodrama. The uniqueness of the *Alcestis* is not its happy ending, which was not unknown in Greek tragedy. Its relative shortness and fairy-tale like theme of death and rebirth which is unusual in extant Greek tragedy, adds to its uniqueness and controversy.