SHOW SOME LOVE THIS V-DAY

The Women’s Resource Center presents the 12th annual for-charity production of “The Vagina Monologues,” Eve Ensler’s celebration of all things female, on February 14th in the Soda Center.

By Valerie Ettenhofer

It’s not every day that young women gather on stage and talk about the most intimate parts of their lives and bodies. In fact, author Eve Ensler thought that the stigma surrounding womanhood and words like “vagina” was so strong that she wrote a set of female-empowering monologues to help diminish it. Eighteen years later, colleges all over the country are still performing The Vagina Monologues, which is based on Ensler’s interviews with dozens of women.

On February 14th, a cast of eight SMC students will take the stage at the Soda Center and deliver monologues on everything female-centric, from menstruation to rape, in the 12th annual Saint Mary’s production of The Vagina Monologues. The performance, which is widely known as “V-Day: Until the Violence Stops,” benefits local rape crisis center Community Violence Solutions through $5 ticket prices and $10 staff and faculty prices. There will be both a 3pm and an 8pm showing, and students who have gone in the past attest that each year the show is fun, inspiring, and not to be missed.

The WRC event, which is relatively rare for a Catholic campus, includes “Spotlight Pieces,” or annually new pieces with a particular focus. This year, these include “Then We Were Jumping,” an appropriately poetic piece for an introspective young cast.

Justher Gutierrez, a student facilitating this year’s event along with Liliana Campson, explained the cast’s emotionally invested rehearsal schedule; four days a week, the women get together not only to rehearse, but to reflect on the weighty topics brought up by V-Day. Gutierrez cites mother and daughter relationships, body image, and even infanticide as some of the topics the group links back to V-Day’s purpose.

This Valentine’s Day, don’t miss a performance that is sure to empower, provoke, entertain, and enlighten. V-Day tickets are available at www.stmarys-ca.edu/wrc and on eventbrite.com under “V-Day: Until the Violence Ends.”
Experience the music of Las Cafeteras!

During SMC’s annual Wo/Men’s conference on March 8th, enjoy a performance by Las Cafeteras, a self-described “vibrant musical fusion” band.

The LA band combines spoken word, folk music, and traditional Latin music. Their creative lyrics reference social justice issues and have important themes that only add to their fun and original sound.

Las Cafeteras have performed songs addressing issues including immigration reform and crimes against women.

Save the date for Saturday, March 8th, when the WRC’s annual Wo/ Men’s Conference will take over the Soda Center for an informative and inspiring day of student-and-staff-led workshops and speaking engagements. The conference, which aims to challenge sexism and racism, has been a Saint Mary’s staple event for the past five years. Tickets are available at stmarys-ca.edu/wrc under the event tab, and meals are included in all-day passes.

This year’s speakers include Wanda Johnson, the mother of late Oscar Grant. Johnson and her family have made headlines in the wake of Grant’s murder by a BART officer, as the Oakland community rallied for justice in the racially charged case. In January, Johnson visited the SMC community and stirred up an emotional discussion of systematic racism and injustice within the American justice system.

Other speakers include Betty Reid Soskin, America’s oldest park ranger at the age of 92, and social justice groups including Community Violence Solutions and MOMS in Alameda county.

Programming is not just for the professionals, either! Saint Mary’s students and staffs are leading workshops and discussion topics ranging from “Healing the Wounds of Sexual Assault & Racism with Poetry” to “From Jail to School and Beyond—Exploring the Transformative Power of Education.”

Students will also be putting on “poster sessions” outside of the workshops, informing conference-goers of issues that they’re passionate about and exploring the question of the day, “How can we make a difference?”