

MOVIES OF THE MONTH

Compiled by Bethany Melendez / STAFF WRITER

NOV. 9

The Grinch

Rated: PG
Genre: Animation/Comedy/Family
Starring: Benedict Cumberbatch, Rashida Jones, Angela Lansbury, Kenan Thompson

Overlord

Rated: R
Genre: Action/Thriller/Mystery
Starring: Wyatt Russell, Mathilde Ollivier, Pilou Asbæk

River Runs Red

Rated: NR
Genre: Thriller/Mystery
Starring: Taye Diggs, John Cusack, George Lopez, Luke Hemsworth

Nov. 16

Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald

Rated: PG-13
Genre: Adventure/Family/Fantasy
Starring: Johnny Depp, Eddie Redmayne, Katherine Waterston, Dan Fogler

Instant Family

Rated: PG-13
Genre: Comedy
Starring: Isabela Moner, Rose Byrne, Mark Wahlberg

The Last Race

Rated: NR
Genre: Documentary/Sport
Starring: Marty Berger, Mike Cappiello, Barbara Cromarty

Nov. 21

Creed II

Rated: PG-13
Genre: Drama/Sport
Starring: Michael B. Jordan, Sylvester Stallone, Tessa Thompson

Robin Hood

Rated: PG-13
Genre: Action/Adventure
Starring: Taron Egerton, Jamie Dornan, Eve Hewson, Jamie Foxx

Graduate guides ‘Endgame’ to stage

Jackie Velez / FEATURES EDITOR

A University of the Incarnate Word theatre arts graduate is making her return to her alma mater’s stage as director of “Endgame,” which opens Friday, Nov. 9, in Cheever Theatre.

Amanda Ireta-Goode, originally from Querétaro, Mexico, is no stranger to the stage. She grew up in San Antonio and while she attended UIW she studied dramatic literature and its historical context, as well as directing.

What Ireta-Goode’s learned at UIW and away with community theatrical productions is helping her make her directorial debut with Samuel Beckett’s “Endgame.”

“I have long-loved Samuel Beckett’s work and, when Dr. Robert Ball, chair of the Theatre Department, reached out to me to offer me the role as director, I couldn’t refuse,” Ireta-Goode said. “I love Beckett’s complexity, the way he explores human experience in nuanced and sometimes absurd ways.”

“‘Endgame’ in particular called to me because I think it explores relationships and the kind of simultaneous futility and hopefulness in depending on others to build a life. This play is challenging, and Beckett simultaneously leaves a lot of room for interpretation while having some specific demands.

“I think an opportunity to wrestle with that challenge feeds me creatively and is teaching me a lot about how I approach collaborative work, how I think about the world, and what I want to build for myself. It’s also wonderful to come back to the department that was an extended family for me as a student and to work with mentors I so respect.”

Ireta-Goode directs four characters in “Endgame.” The plot involves the four living in one room after a disaster. The roles and the cast members include Hamm, the master, played by Devin Donovan; Clov, his reluctant servant, played by Nicolas Guerrero;

Nagg, Hamm’s father, played by Marc Cantu; and Nell, Hamm’s mother, played by Sharlee Krkosa.

Nagg and Nell have long been confined to two ashbins and are entirely dependent on Hamm and Clov for their care. Hamm is blind and confined to a wheelchair. Clov cannot sit and is the only person able to move about.

“There is an abundance of theories about who and what the characters represent,” Ireta-Goode said. “Beckett is famously difficult to decipher. One prominent theory, which I think informs our production to some extent, is the role that the superego, ego and id play in our lives. In this case, Hamm is the superego or master controlling the situation; Clov is the ego operating day-to-day; and Nagg and Nell are the id, limited to our base needs and functions. In more concrete terms, I think the characters help us explore what keeps us going in seemingly hopeless situations. Why do we stay with each other? What motivates us? How do we fill our time?”

Audiences can expect the play to delve into a bit of meaning to life in a chaotic situation that has the characters rely on each other, Ireta-Goode said.

“Throughout ‘Endgame,’ we explore what it’s like to continue finding meaning -- if there is any -- in hopeless situations; how we can both be resigned to circumstances and still search for the next bit of enjoyment, or continue to ‘play.’

“I think that in life, as in chess (the endgame in chess is the last part of a game as it nears its end and there are limited moves), one can see the end coming, or how things will likely play out, and choose to continue playing -- and how we do that, regardless of the outcome, is worth examining.”

As for her own life, Ireta-Goode joined the corporate world as a bilingual sales and service representative for an insurance company

after graduating from UIW in 2009. She is currently in charge of fundraising as a developmental director for Gemini Ink, San Antonio’s Literary Arts Center, a local nonprofit organization whose mission is to help people create and share the human story by building language skills, self-esteem and a strong sense of human connection through writing and literacy.

Outside her corporate responsibilities, Ireta-Goode continued to hone her creative side by working at Jump-Start Performance Co., a theatre company dedicated to the discovery and support of new ideas in the arts and education, and Overtime Theatre as a light board operator and occasional performer.

“After stepping away from theatre for a few years to focus on my professional career, I returned to the stage in 2016 with performances in ‘The Vagina Monologues’ and ‘Viva Theatre Company’s Life Lessons: Confessions.’ I recently played Ultima’s Owl in the Classic Theatre’s production of ‘Bless Me, Ultima,’ and Beatriz Gonzales in Classic’s Second Series presentation of ‘Burning Patience.’ ”

After taking on “Endgame,” Ireta-Goode said, its cast and crew has been working tirelessly to put on a spectacular performance they hope the audience will find enjoyable.

“We started production meetings back in early May of this year. The first few meetings were focused on establishing an artistic vision for the production, making choices that set up how we will approach everything from set to costumes, lighting and sound -- and how I as director work with actors to flesh out the characters, who inhabit this little world.”

Ireta-Goode said she has been making adjustments to the play since the summer. She and the designers worked diligently on the world they created for the play before returning this fall



Amanda Ireta-Goode is director.

to work with student actors. “I don’t think there are any mishaps that prolong the production process, but I will say that being a guest director is an exciting and challenging learning process. I think that receiving feedback from the rest of the production team, designers, and the producer, Dr. Ball, helped me see what is working and what needed tweaking. Do the acting choices reflect the characters Beckett has given us? Are things making sense to an audience? Are there stronger choices we can make? Sometimes directing is a little like cooking a complex sauce. There are so many elements that go into creating a rich experience, and sometimes you need taste-testers to make sure you’re on the right track.”

Whatever the recipe called for to bring “Endgame” to life, Ireta-Goode said she hopes it will attract a full house.

“I hope that audiences recognize themselves a bit in the characters; the ways that we rely on each other, the ways that we fall into patterns, the ways that we can love each other in complicated ways. I hope they laugh a little and reflect on their own experiences. And, hopefully, they can find a little relief and joy.”

FYI: “Endgame” opens at 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 9, in Cheever Theatre.

Other performances will be 8 p.m. Nov. 10, 7 p.m. Nov. 13-15, and 8 p.m. Nov. 16.

UIW alumnus Amanda Ireta-Goode is the director. Scene design is by Christopher McCollum, costume design by Lourdes Grancharoff, lighting design by guest artist Melissa Gaspar and technical direction by Justin Bennett.

UIW students, faculty and staff get free admission with UIW ID. Otherwise, tickets are \$12 for adults, \$9 for seniors, \$8 for non-UIW students; and \$7 a person for groups of 10 or more.

For more information or reservations, call (210) 829-3800 or (210) 829-3810 during regular business hours.



Devin Donovan, left, is Hamm, and Nicolas Guerrero is Clov.

Maddie Hemby/photo