

It is, once again, that time of year when Hallmark cards, flowers, and chocolates are sold at outrageous prices for the sake of a holiday. On a more meaningful note, it's also time for SCSU's annual production of "The Vagina Monologues," based off the play written by Eve Ensler. "The Vagina Monologues" is a part of the V-Day movement, a global effort to stop violence against women.

One of the show's co-directors, Brianne Perreten, a junior majoring in Communication Studies, was emphatic about this year's cast. "We have a really great cast this year. It's a lot bigger than it has been in past years, so you'll see a lot more variety," Perreten said. "The way the pieces are being performed is a lot different; we have some funny accents, and I think that the interpretation of the pieces this year is a lot funnier and a lot more entertaining."

Cati Morin, a senior English major in her second year with the production, agreed. "This year, we have a much larger cast. It's a lot of different women with different backgrounds, which gives the monologues a great insight into different perspectives," Morin said. "There's a lot of really funny pieces, a lot of funny jokes, [but] then there's some serious pieces as well."

Like productions in the past, this year's event is about more than two nights of entertainment. "The Vagina Monologues" can also be seen as a tool for women's empowerment. "[It] actually really does empower you to be able to use the language that you want and turn such a dirty word, as a lot of people call it, into something of power and so I can use it now comfortably not as an insult but as in a conversation. I don't whisper it," said Morin.

"Performing the Vagina Monologues as a Means for Women's Empowerment" is also the focus of the upcoming Women on Wednesday series at 12 p.m. Wed., Feb. 10, in the Atwood Theatre.

In addition to each evening's performance, there will also be a silent auction beginning when the doors open at 6 p.m. Proceeds from the event benefit the Central Minnesota Sexual Assault Center with a portion going back to the V-Day organization in order to benefit women throughout the world. "Not only are you entertained, [but] you get to help stop violence against women," said Catherine Bjertness, co-director and a senior majoring in Communication Arts and Literature. "If [you] want to have a night filled with laughter and excitement, then come to 'The Vagina Monologues' and help to raise awareness and money to help stop violence against women," Bjertness advised.

"The Vagina Monologues" begin at 7 p.m. Fri., Feb. 12, and Sat., Feb. 13, in the Ritsche Auditorium with doors opening at 6 p.m. Advance tickets can be purchased in Atwood. Student prices are \$3 if purchased in advance and \$5 at the door while tickets for the general public are \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door.