

Teachers act out

Educators take to the stage at UGA



Photos by AJ Reynolds/Staff

Main: Kristyl Tift, right, participates in a discussion with the audience after "Teachers Tell All: Theatre for Social Change in Our Educational Communities" at the Cellar Theatre. Second: Ensemble members perform a scene relating to standardized testing and performance standards. Third: Kristyl Tift performs a scene about the cutting of drama and arts programs at schools.

By Lee Shearer
lee.shearer@onlineathens.com

Teachers took to the stage Friday on the University of Georgia campus, dramatizing issues they and their students face in Georgia classrooms.

"This is a show by, for and about teachers," UGA professor Melissa Cahmann-Taylor told the audience in the Cellar Theatre of UGA's Fine Arts Building.

The audience was mainly teachers enrolled in UGA summer classes, like the teacher-actors in Friday's skits, which were created and performed by students in a summer school class

show by, for and about teachers."

University of Georgia professor Melissa Cahmann-Taylor

taught by Cahmann-Taylor, a professor of language and literacy education, and Emily Saha-kian, a professor in UGA's theatre and French departments. The teachers acted out what they loved about their work, like the opportunities to build community, awaken students' passion for learning, inspire, and those "I get it!" moments when they see understanding dawn in their students eyes.

The all-teacher ensemble also talked about some of the things they don't like — meetings, whining, high-stakes standardized testing and angry administrators or parents.

Rockdale County theatre teacher Michelle Thorne portrayed a first-year French language teacher's aloneness and uncertainty after she was assigned to teach a French Advanced Placement course. The students and their parents were counting on her. If students scored a 4 or 5 on the AP test, they could get college credit for their work, saving them and their parents money to apply to other