Written by Jill Walsh
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They said it would be short, and they meant it. Clocking in at just under 45 minutes, last weekend's production of Augustana College's annual Short Play Festival was a collaboration of four student producers and featured Tony Kushner's script *East Coast Ode to Howard Jarvis*.

Kushner, the award-winning writer of *Angels in America*, *A Bright Room Called Day*, and *Hom ebody/Kabul*
, is usually very politically minded in his work, and
Jarvis
is no exception. The humorous script is uniquely structured in monologues and revolves around a tax-evasion scheme in which people begin claiming themselves "non-resident, non-immigrant aliens" on their tax forms.

The characters rarely "talk" to each other, though they interact physically and also listen in on what each has to say. Featuring 10 actors in 24 roles, *Jarvis* was successful when performers developed a distinct persona for each of the multiple characters they portrayed. Corinne Veverka, for example, constantly fiddled with her oversized glasses when playing the "Woman in Payroll Department" and then reverted to a hard, Spanish accent and broad gestures as "Karen." Neutral black costuming was used to allow actors to shift easily between roles.

Scenic design was triangular, featuring three sets of tables and chairs to balance the location of each character. A projection screen also effectively but simply conveyed the identity and description of each character during his or her monologue. Though some actors didn't fit the physical descriptions (for example, Katrina Garvins portrayed a male skinhead inmate) it was almost more effective to watch the performers try to convey these foreign qualities through movement and diction.

East Code Ode to Howard Jarvis at Augustana was a structurally difficult script to tackle, but the student producers were up for the challenge. Perhaps lacking in engaging qualities for those who aren't necessarily fond of political theatre, not to mention the plays of Tony Kushner, the actors held this short presentational piece together by developing a unique ensemble of voices through the unique characters they portrayed.