

## **PERFORMANCE at the NORTH CAROLINA JUNIOR CLASSICAL LEAGUE CONVENTION, 12 April 2014**

Seven student groups traveled to UNC-Chapel Hill to perform full plays of Aristophanes and Plautus adapted (by the students themselves) and condensed into 10-minute versions for an audience of 80–100 middle school and high school students and their teachers and parents, who had come from across the state to participate in the annual convention (with various seminars, performances, exhibitions, and competitions) of the state chapter of the national Classics educational/extracurricular organization.

The performance was a success, despite some major logistical hiccups on the NCJCL organization's side of things.

The first group, The Phrontisterion Troupe, performed "The Cloud," an adaptation of Aristophanes' *Clouds*, in which Socrates is recast not as a sophist but as a tween, who uses not the Worse Argument but "Miley Bieber" to defeat not the Better Argument but Reality. The second group, "Call It North West," turned Plautus' *Amphitruo* from a domestic comedy about the birth of Hercules into a comic account of why Kim Kardashian's marriage to Kris Humphries was so short and so quickly followed by her marriage to Kanye West and her giving birth to North West. The third group, Dat Ankle, presented "Michelle," which had Michelle Obama — replacing Lysistrata of Aristophanes' eponymous play — leading the 2012 presidential candidates' spouses in a political-ad-participation strike to get the candidates to reject negative campaigning. The fourth group, Big Melens Theater Productions, performed "Sochi-na," an adaptation of Plautus' *Casina*, where President Obama and his star athlete Chalinus (a woman) use cross-dressing to outwit Vladimir Putin and prevent his star athlete Olympio from winning the prized Casina Medal, which itself takes literally the object-ification of the non-appearing enslaved girl Casina in the Plautine original.

The fifth group, Baby Got Bacchus, presented "Persa," based on the Plautine original of the same title, with the out-group high-schoolers teaming up to embarrass the mean jock and steal his girlfriend from him. The sixth group, the Sausage Sellers, performed "Swag and Satchels," a *Mean Girls*-themed adaptation of Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*, in which instead of the tragedian Euripides pushing his kinsman to infiltrate the women's Thesmophoria festival to convince them not to badmouth the playwright, a high-school jock pushes his nerd friend to infiltrate the popular girls' slumber party to convince them to put the jock on the "Hot" list rather than the "Not" list. The final group, Ancient Greek Dressing, did "Lost at Sea," a *Pirates of the Caribbean*-themed reimagining of Plautus' *Poenulus* (Latin for "the little Carthaginian"), where thefts and duels and hunts for hidden treasure lead to the reuniting of long-lost brother and sister.

The Bridge Initiative Grant from the Committee for the Promotion of Latin allowed, in combination with STARR Foundation funds awarded by the Wake Forest College dean's office, for the chartering of a bus to transport the student performers to and from Chapel Hill.