

# The Zen of Small Towns

Guest Director Stephen Wangh Makes Simplicity Profound

Performed in early December, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* may at first have sounded unusually tame for the MFA Theater: Contemporary Performance Department, a program known for experimentation. But, according to Stephen Wangh, this "American play of living and dying" was perfectly at home at a Buddhist-inspired university, where emphasis is placed on being conscious of everyday occurrences. Featuring second-year MFA students, *Our Town* played to sold out audiences.



The Stage Manager, played by Thornton Wilder himself many times, is a character of multiple faces here shared by Sharon Stern Siegel and Barrett Ogden.



Highlighting watershed moments in the human journey, *Our Town* wouldn't be complete without a wedding. Emily (Lauren Brenner) and George (Ben Stuber) celebrate their nuptials.



Professor Willard, played by Téana David, prepares to give a lecture on the history of Grover's Corners when she is interrupted by the Stage Manager (Barrett Ogden).



On the surface, all is well at the Gibbs' household where George (Ben Stuber), Mrs. Gibbs (Kyra Bowman) and Rebecca (Lisa Samoy) share breakfast.



In this play about "living and dying," Sam Craig (Téana David) questions Joe Stoddard (Garrett Ayers) about the death of his cousin.