



RICHARD CHASE

Zoning in...Playwright Lisa Lentini and "C-Zone" stars Shawn Polizzi (l.) and Victoria Agresti

CREATIVITY IN ACTION

A college student's "Top Ten" list of leisure time activities does not typically include play writing. Unless the student is Liza Lentini '94. The English dramatic literature and theater major has been busy writing plays since the eighth grade, beginning with monologues.

"I had no idea what I was doing—they were awful. I never took them for anything more than enjoyment," she says of those early plays. "I guess you have to experiment to find what's right for you."

In the summer of 1991, Ms. Lentini's experimentation yielded "The C-Zone," which she wrote in a matter of days, merely as an exercise based on a thought she had about friendship. The one-act play focuses on the long-standing relationship between two young women and their need to find a balance between giving and taking.

"I didn't even look it over," she says. "Then my boyfriend read it and seemed really touched, so I read it over and was surprised at what I'd written."

As Ms. Lentini's surprise turned into confidence, she showed the play to friend and housemate Jason Bermudez '94, an English dramatic literature and theater major whose specialty is directing. Things progressed quickly from then on, as Professor of Theater Pam Bongas and Assistant Professor of Theater David Fox became involved and the production of "The C-Zone" began to take shape.

Mr. Bermudez chose Shawn Polizzi and Victoria Agresti, both sophomores, as the

play's two characters. Sophomores Peter Hurowitz and Stephanie Coll, two other housemates from 9 Taunton—Wheaton's Respect for the Visual and Performing Arts theme house—signed on as lighting director and stage manager.

Professor Bongas brought representatives from the American College Theater Festival (ACTF) to campus to see the play (which had two separate runs) and, by December, "The C-Zone" had been selected for a regional competition of productions by college students. Ms. Lentini's work was one of only four original plays in the competition. In addition, four Wheaton students were chosen to take part in the acting competition at the festival: Aaron Smith '94, Joy Tashjian '92, Jason Moscartolo '93, and Ms. Agresti.

The ACTF Region One 24th Annual Festival, held in late February in Fairfield, Conn., was a thrilling and educational time for those involved. "The C-Zone" fared well in the four-day judging, garnering "a lot of good feedback and criticism, which is great," says Ms. Lentini, who credits the cast and crew for a lot of the play's success. "Honestly, everyone involved [from Wheaton] did very well."

Even as "The C-Zone" was being readied for competition, Ms. Lentini continued to write new plays; since September she has written four. "I write all the time," she says. "It's my hobby; it's what I like to do. I love to create."