"The budget was $8," says Gwen Miller, laughing as she recalled how her late husband, Felix H. "Bebe" Miller (MD '55), described the first Scope and Scalpel production in 1955. "Bebe used to say it grew into this mammoth production. But in the original show, the budget was $8, for pretzels."

The class of '15's budget of $15,000 dwarfs that of the 1955 show, PMS IV. But Little Else has changed, like its predecessors. This year's production of Modern Family Medicine will be riddled with bawdy humor and inside jokes about the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. With a few exceptions, every aspect of the show -- the script, costumes, music, direction, acting, sets, choreography, fundraising -- is done by fourth-year med students.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Pitt med students hamming it up on stage, where they poke fun at their professors, their profession, and themselves. Of course, not everyone has spent time under the lights. Yet dozens of students will be learning lines, lyrics, and dance moves. These moments will become some of their last shared experiences before the classmates part ways to begin their residencies.

With Match Day over, they have less than two months to prepare. The countdown until showtime -- and graduation -- has begun.
TONIGHT IS THE FIRST READ-THROUGH OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE 2015 PERFORMANCE OF SCOPE AND SCALPEL.

I HAVE THE LAST FIVE PAGES OF SOMEBODY'S SCRIPT. CAN YOU GUYS MAKE SURE THAT YOURS ENDS ON PAGE 120?

120!

SARAH COHEN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, WRITING COMMITTEE, ETC. (Duke University Medical Center, Internal Medicine - Pediatrics)

THE SCRIPT IS MASSIVE. IN FACT, THE ENTIRE SHOW IS A HUGE UNDERTAKING. AND THE PRESSURE OF HONORING THIS DECADES-LONG TRADITION IS LOOMING ...

14 SCENES!

TORY STEEN, ORCHESTRA CODIRECTOR, CAST, BRIGHAM & WOMEN'S HOSPITAL/HARVARD UNIVERSITY, ANESTHESIOLOGY

LEO CHEN, CAST INCLUDING A PORTRAYAL OF DEAN ARTHUR S. LEVINE (MATCHED AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY, UROLOGICAL SURGERY)

... THERE WILL BE SNACKS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

AS THE FIRST REHEARSAL ENDS, ONE THING IS CERTAIN ...

OOH, CHOCOLATES! WHO BROUGHT THOSE?

I DON'T KNOW ...

BUT IT'S THE BIGGEST BOX OF CHOCOLATES I'VE SEEN IN A LONG TIME!

* SUNG TO THE TUNE OF "UPTOWN FUNK," BY MARK RONSON.

"FOUR YEARS OF MED SCHOOL GON' SHOW DAD THAT I'M NO FOOL!"

FOUR YEARS, LEARNED MEDICINE NO SLEEPIN' IN STRAIGHT AUSCULTATIN'!

PITTMED!

"PALPATE FEELS GREAT CARING FOR FOLKS IN THE CITY!"

GOT SCRUBS UNDER MY WHITE COAT, MIGHT ADMIT MYSELF I'M SO PRETTY!

YINZ AT?

"FOUR YEARS OF MED SCHOOL GON' SHOW DAD THAT I'M NO FOOL!"

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... THERE WILL BE SNACKS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.
THE FIRST DANCE REHEARSAL -- IN ONE OF THE LECTURE HALLS IN SCAIFE, TONIGHT THEY WILL BE LEARNING THE CHOREOGRAPHY FOR "GUNNER," A PARODY OF MICHAEL JACKSON’S "THRILLER."

... there will be SNACKS every step of the way. 14 scenes!

"GUNNER: A student who focuses on earning a high score at the expense of his or her fellow students ... Recent usage has come to mean, “Anyone who is studying when you don’t want to be, and thus makes you feel guilty.”

Modern Family Medicine Program 2015
"I’ve never really danced ... I mean, I’ve danced in the club before!"

"At the beginning I thought I was totally hopeless. But now, I think I can get it with practice ... I’m excited, because I was one of the head writers, so seeing it come together is really cool."

Sarah Sevarende, producer, asst. choreographer, etc. (Indiana University, general surgery)

Rehearsal continues with "Fake a Cough," a rendition of the pop song, "Shake It Off."

"If you can stick around for just a few minutes, and put them in the lecture hall ... student lounge ... bulletin boards. I’ll hang posters, if you provide the ride home."

Sarah Cohen just had her wisdom teeth removed. Posters for this year’s show!

"I’ve never really danced ... I mean, I’ve danced in the club before!"

"At the beginning I thought I was totally hopeless. But now, I think I can get it with practice ... I’m excited, because I was one of the head writers, so seeing it come together is really cool."

Are you nervous?

"I’m nervous-excited. There are a couple of songs that I’m singing with some other soloists, and we’re doing cool harmonies ... that will be fun to do live on stage."

So, is there anything that makes you nervous, in life?

"What makes me nervous? ... I’m nervous about being a doctor in three months. I think I speak for all of us when I say that."

If you can stick around for just a few minutes, and put them in the lecture hall ... student lounge ... bulletin boards. I’ll hang posters, if you provide the ride home.

Absolutely!

Dean McEllroy gave the green light to the first scope and scalpel production in 1955, titled PMS IV.

As the origin story goes, the idea to do a comedic play about life at Pitt Med was cooked up over drinks at a local bar.

Kyle Puff, cast, writing committee (Washington Hospital, family medicine)

Sarah Sevarende, producer, asst. choreographer, etc. (Indiana University, general surgery, several surgeries?)

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Why not act out their grumblings on stage, with song and dance?


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TOMORROW IS THE FIRST TIME THE CAST WILL BE SINGING WITH THE ORCHESTRA, DOING A FULL RUN-THROUGH OF THE SHOW’S MUSICAL NUMBERS ...

KEEP THE TALK DOWN, WE’RE TUNING THANK YOU!

AND THE LAST ANNOUNCEMENT IS … I HAVE CAKE!

BORN READY!

GAB LANGMANN, ORCHESTRA, CAST, ETC. (UPMC/UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, INTERNAL MEDICINE – PEDIATRICS)

THE ORCHESTRA INCLUDES STUDENTS FROM ALL YEARS!

... OPENING NIGHT IS ABOUT TWO WEEKS AWAY.

THE ORCHESTRA INCLUDES STUDENTS FROM ALL YEARS!

* THE ORCHESTRA INCLUDES STUDENTS FROM ALL YEARS!

SOOO ...

THE TEMPO?

TORY WILL CATCH UP!

ORCHESTRA?

OOR, THERE’S SHEET!

RENE UREJE, CAST, (WALTER REED NATIONAL MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER, TRANSITIONAL MEDICINE AND ANESTHESIOLOGY)

DURING “GUNNER,” VINCENT PRICE’S OMNIOUS MONOLOGUE IN “THRILLER” IS SWAPPED WITH A RECORDING OF DR. SCHUMANN, THEIR ANATOMY PROFESSOR … BUT THE TIMING IS ROUGH.

WE’VE TACKED EACH ARTERY, VEIN, AND NERVE, TO TERRORIZE THE GRADES CURVE! AND THOUGH YOU FIGHT TO STAY AFOAT, YOUR VERTEBRAS START TO SHUDDER!

FOR NO MERE FIRST YEAR CAN RESIST THE HARSHNESS OF THE ARYA AHAAAAAA!

AS WE PLAYED, THE ORCHESTRA THINK ABOUT THE TIMING, AND WEREWRE...

GAB LANGMANN

I’M PLAYING WITH THE VIDEO?

JORDAN KNOX, DIRECTOR, CAST, ETC. (UNIVERSITY OF UTAH AFFILIATED HOSPITALS, FAMILY MEDICINE)

I’M TRYING TO CUE YOU, BUT NOT CUE JORDAN.

JAY MANG, ORCHESTRA (FRESHMAN, MED STUDENT)

DO, I’LL GIVE A LITTLE CUE FOR YOU AND A BIGGER CUE FOR JORDAN.

TORY STEEN

THANK-CUE!

TORY STEEN

JORDAN KNOX
I'm one of the uteris in the jud dance, since I'm going into OB/GYN.

One more time!

Yeah, they have ovaries on their hands!

They are passed down from class to class, and they usually use them in the OB/GYN scene.

... it's like a tradition.

The costumes are just one of many moving parts the students are piecing together for the show.

I've been making things mostly at home... much to the chagrin of my housemates, who are probably sick of having our living room taken over with pattern pieces and animal prints.

Back at the orchestra run-through...

What's it going to be like when everyone goes their separate ways?

Leo! Can we steal you?

Yeah!

I can finish this question...

It will be tough, but, high school ended, college ended. Some of my friends from back then, I still keep in touch with. Some, we've lost touch over time.

Leo Chen

But, we start a new journey in life.

And we start a new journey in life.

It's just nice to be able to see everyone enjoy their time together as we prepare for the show.

One more time. From the top!

Mikaela Alger, costumes, cast, etc. (Swedish Medical Center/University of Washington, Family Medicine)

Priyanka Amin (UPMC/University of Pittsburgh, Psychiatry), one of the show's producers and I were working on some of the promotional stuff.

And she put on a recording of the first scope and scalpel show... it was really neat listening to past medical students -- who are all likely well past retirement -- parodying the same kinds of things we talk about in our show. It really made me feel like we are part of a legacy, albeit a rather goofy one.

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