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Edward Bilous



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By [Logan Herrington \(/author/logan-herrington\)](#)

Artistic director Edward Bilous' mission for the last few years has been to bring a collection of photographs to life through theater. Live electroacoustic music, Skype interviews, stage acting and photographs from the war in Afghanistan all make up his latest project, "Basetrack Live."

When Bilous was first introduced to Basetrack, a photo gallery based on the lives of American soldiers in Afghanistan, at a Google Expo in 2010, he was inspired to create "Basetrack Live." The multimedia production, which premieres at 8 p.m. Thursday at McCullough Theatre, attempts to place the audience into the life of an American marine in southern Afghanistan.

"War nowadays is a very different experience than ever before," Bilous said. "Now, soldiers can communicate with their families and friends throughout the entire war. They live in multiple layers of reality because they are fighting the war as well as continuing to be involved with their family. Basetrack Live represents the soldiers and their families' ability to deal with war today."

According to Bilous, "Basetrack Live" is not about political posturing or making any arguments about war but instead making the audience understand what is asked of America's servicemen and women.

"We allow the history of the war to be written by the people who fought it," Bilous said.

According to play producer Anne Hamburger, every word of the production is adapted from interviews with soldiers. By doing this, the director attempted to avoid sensationalizing the accounts of their sources and focus on the human experience of war.

"The question from the beginning has been this: How can we use theater as a catalyst to promote understanding between the 99 percent who do not go to war and the 1 percent who do?" Hamburger said.

“Basetrack Live” director Seth Bockley emphasized the production is not about military policy or officers with positions of authority but rather the details of the lives of those who enter at the ground level. He said the three-dimensional nature of the production allows the audience to see the rich and complex reasons soldiers have for enlisting.

The music of “Basetrack Live,” written by Michelle DiBucci, is perhaps one of the most important aspects of the production. The arrangement will feature various electroacoustic instruments, including an amplified violin and cello, an electric drum set and a trumpet.

“The challenge in creating the score has been trying to incorporate styles meaningful to the marines, as well as one that would create a good soundscape for the show,” DiBucci said. “Some parts of the soundscape actually uses recordings from the battlefield.”

Bockley encourages all attendees to participate in their social media initiative “#basetracklive,” so their opinions can be heard.

“The story has a strong vein of hope,” Bockley said. “The spine of the story looks at the personal damage caused by war but ends with the possibility for healing.”

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