movies...

G & S 'Sorcerer,' opera at Agassiz

By Charles Foster Ford

'The Sorcerer' is an excellent example of what should be done with Gilbert & Sullivan. The small student production of G&S is a splendid parody of 19th Century opera, with voices inadequate to the task. The only productions I have enjoyed were those few which took this whole original approach, and refused to be pretentious. Dave Mills' staging of 'The Sorcerer' shows just such originality.

This was the first full length comic opera which Gilbert & Sullivan wrote together, and it is a loose and flabby example of their art. The first act seems terribly long because most of it goes by in static inertness. Also, there are several places where comic ideas are thrown away in one scene, where better craftsmanship would have saved material. Whole new plays in them, Sir Marmaduke and Lady Sangazure mean that they were too polite to admit their passion, but after one long the possibilities are dropped. In Dally drunkenness on the seas appeal he had in his youth, yet none of those impassioned young ladies appear in act two. Gilbert had barely begun to write.

But the triumph of the evening is the singing. Dave Mills has come up with a kind of theatrical production in which the singing is quicker than the ear. His cast is full of seasoned comic presence and attitude, out of some ancient handbook for modern dance. The 'seam style' is solely in their epression. Instead of singing his natural tendency to 'stand and deliver' is rather still postures; he has used this instructing handicap as the basis of his approach. The results are hilarious. In fact, the careful consideration of gesture and attitude is so well done that, in at least two cases, they call attention away from quite atrocious voices. There is too much fun to watch for the ear to be opcion.

This technique comes off best, of course, when executed by good, supple actors with decent voices, of course, when executed by good, supple actors with decent voices. Several young ladies remarked, 'It's all right, it's good, it's good!' and laughing ... to notice, and itself is too busy watching . . . it to Dave Mills, even the orchestra is a kind of theatrical equivalent of Puck is J. Welling-

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