Dramashop good but uneven

By Kent Pitman

The MIT Dramashop's recent presentations of "Farmed Oak" and "Orphée" go far beyond the simple characterizations and slapdash sets that one would expect of a nine-day production.

Professor Joseph Everingham's direction of "Farmed Oak" was exceptionally fine. Every aspect of the play, in particular casting, character development and set design, seemed well-planned and appropriate.

The play, by Noel Coward, depicts a day in the life of Henry Gow, a man who has grown tired of living with his wife, daughter and mother-in-law. He announces that he has been saving money for a long time so that he could afford to walk out on them. Despite the family's promises to make up for the way they've treated him and his wife's pleas that he take pity, he leaves.

Mark deLemos '78, in the role of Henry Gow, does well in his portrayal of the quiet father who returns home one afternoon to speak his first and final piece and leaves his home a free man.

Brooke Jackson, as Gow's wife Doris, or the nagging wife who would make any husband want to break away.

Ann Oshita, Wellesley '79, as the nagging wife who completely ignores things that he completely ignores that he completely ignores.

David Muller '77, which drew whispered praise from the audience as the curtain drew back for the opening of the first scene.

"Orphée," a play by Jean Cocteau and directed by William Morris '77, was well done even if lacking the polish evident in "Farmed Oak." This is an unfair comparison, however, this being Morris' first attempt at direction.

Written in 1925, "Orphée" is a departure from the dominating theatrical conventions of that era. The play deals symbolically with the story of a man who has become so involved in other things that he completely ignores his wife.

He realizes his error when Death takes her from him and he is forced to face Death himself in order to recover her. The story is based on the Greek myth of Orpheus and his wife Eurydice.

The performances of Curtis Fennell '77 (Orphée), Margaret Hainsworth '76 (Eurydice) and Jerry Epstein '76 (Hecuba) gave credibility to an incredible tale. Characterizations by other members of the cast were satisfactory, although some seemed shallow and lifeless.

Special lighting effects by Robert Van der Kloot '76 and set design by Lisa Jablonski '78 were practical and effective.

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