Dramashop's Six Characters disappointing

By Kathy Harén

Imagine yourself rehearsing for a play. Suddenly six strange people dressed in mourning clothes somberly walk up to your stage and proceed to create havoc with your rehearsal.

They claim to be characters, not real people, abandoned by their writer and destined to wander at loose ends until someone finishes their story.

At first, your director tries to throw them out of the theatre, but the acting company. They really insist on staying. Finally, your director relents, and the characters are able to complete their destinies through sour acting company.

Actor Melianne, with few exceptions, seem to be no more real than the contrasting illusionary Six Characters.

They lack reality because their reactions to this group of six strange people aren't human or believable; their reactions are "harmy" or non-existent, tinted with artificiality.

It is not entirely the fault of the actors portraying this group of Actors that their characterization are unreal. A play of this nature is extremely difficult to perform believably due to the obvious absurdity of the situations. Each performer must search for his own internal attitudes and reactions towards the situation with the help of the director.

One somehow gains the impression that the director, Joseph Everingham, spent a great deal of time rehearsing with the Six Characters, all of whom were excellent, yet did not spend sufficient time with the other Actors in an effort to develop their smaller roles.

This play also requires yet another illusion: the audience must be convinced that an actual rehearsal is in progress, at which they themselves are not present.

The production does achieve this impression of a rehearsal through its appropriate staging. Initially, the houselights are on, and the bare stage setting and atmosphere are typical of what one might find in an actual Dramashop rehearsal.

This stage illusion, however, is made less believable because the Dramashop actors portray professional actors. Perhaps Dramashop should have further adapted the already rewritten script and portrayed themselves without any artificial pretense.

This transition could have been achieved through changes in dialogue and dress. As it stands, the Actors wear coats, ties, and dresses. Real Dramashop actors normally dress more casually in pants and t-shirts—at their rehearsals.

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M.I.T. Dramashop

"SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR"

By Luigi Pirandello

Directed by

Joseph D. Everingham

Sets by

William Fregosi

Lighting by

Edward Darna

Costumes by

Cecilia Eller

Little Theatre, Kresge Auditorium, M.I.T.

Fri & Sat, May 6 & 7 at 8 P.M.

All Seats $2.50

RESERVATIONS: 661-2520

The six leading characters, all tipped members of a family, portray their roles with admirable conviction. Susan Mogollo '78, as the attractive, dramatic Sepia daughter, plays her role with the necessary passion. Andrew Piek is excellent as the Father.

Howard Boles '77 and Brooks Jackson as unattractive, unprofessional Actors of the Son and the Mothet. The major difficulty of these roles lies in their periods of prolonged silence on stage, which requires them to maintain characterization without speaking.

Boles is constantly alert as the stiff, uncomfortable Son. He never fails in his interpretation of the role and is constantly aware of the situation which surrounds him.

As previously stated, there are a few counterpoint performances in the Acting Company. Trish Lacey's portrayal of the Leading Lady is without a doubt the most polished in the production. Allison Benedict as the Character Actress is extremely funny and more importantly, quite believable.

In assessing the theatrical merits of any production, one must not ignore the actors who portray the smaller roles. They did not have the opportunity to develop the precisely described situation—they were not really Actors in a company whose rehearsal was interrupted. In its place, absolutely requires that they be believable—

Six Characters in Search of an Author might be a play about the absurdity of the rather unusual nature of its plot, but considering the talent and potential of the Dramashop, the production could have been much better.