Dream:Play an imaginative production

By Joel West


Strindberg's play is not an easy one to interpret. On the whole, Dramashop deserves credit for tackling a major work and giving a credible rendition of it. This production was marred, however, by a problematic interpretation of the central character, Agnes/Indra's daughter.

The separation of the mortal Agnes from the daughter of the Hindu god Indra is perhaps, justifiable, though the whole point of the play is lost if the character is not convinced that the two are one and the same. The damage is done when two actresses are used to play Agnes.

Kennis Watson '81, utilized in appropriate Eastern garb, portrays Indra's daughter at the beginning and end of the play, while Barbara Masi '81 and Joanne Baldine G split the duties of Agnes until midway through the first half, when they go with The Advocate (Emily Millar '79) to Fingal's Cave, where she passes the character to Baldine. This scene, as well as a similar one after the play's intermission, plays very awkwardly with what could be important two-way interaction replaced by a confusing three-way one. The only thing imaginably worse occurs at the end of the play, when the trinity of Baldine, Masi, and Watson have a less than divine unity in bidding farewell to The Poet (Albert Ruesga '80).

The reason for the separation is eminently justifiable: the demands of the central role would otherwise be overwhelming. And the exchange points are intelligently chosen with insight into the play's meaning. However, though one such transfer even adds drama rather than subtracting it, the duality of Agnes inevitably adds confusion and contradiction. The situation is muddled even further when Masi has a second, albeit brief role. Of the three, Masi clearly gave the best performance, though less convincing in extended agitated speeches, she is undeniably a fine actress with a future if the character is not pushed overly plaintive.

Clarisse Ethridge (Hal Linden and Lee Bloom, courtesy Masi) is to perform with the symphony in a separate episode, Richard and Teddy, on February 21, when the trinity of Baldine, Masi, and Watson have a less than divine unity in bidding farewell to The Poet (Albert Ruesga '80).

Joseph Blath's presence was imposing as the Dean of Law, admonishing his fellow academics. Theologian Michael Guettone '81 brought necessary wit to his part. Mary Flyn '80 was very good as the Stage Door Keeper, and a good though overly plaintive Kristin.

Ron Tyler '81 also deserves notice for his performance of three distinct parts. His off-stage role as Indra was marred by microphone problems. As the Glazier he was appropriately loose and easy-going; in the contrasting role of Quartermaster Officer, he was convincing in his explanation of his troubles and how he dealt with them. Set design by William Fregosi warrants special plaudits. Strindberg's conception requires frequent and rapid changes between various settings; the tiny little Theatre stage does not simplify matters any. Nonetheless, the production crew has delivered a set which is far more imaginative and effective than most "professional" productions of less-demanding plays. The suggestion of Fingal's Cave is especially evocative with an artificial wind from the set combined with the sound of waves breaking to transport the audience to the water's edge.

Red Ryder's heroic efforts

By Al Sanders

☆☆☆☆☆ When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder, starring Candy Clark, Peter Firth, Ingrid Bergman, Richard Widmark, and William Friedkin, produced by Marjoe Gortner Opening Friday at the Sack Roger House. When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder is a powerful look at the disillusionment of a Vietnam veteran with the values of middle-class American society — values that he sees as misguided. Marjoe Gortner stars as Teddy, who since his return from the war has become involved in smuggling cocaine out of Mexico. His first line, he seems to be no more than a long-haired, smart-talking criminal. As his character is explored, however, we see that there is more to him than that.

The first part of the film concerns itself with developing two other story lines along with that of Teddy's. A small New Mexico town is shown to be full of people unhappy with their life, and yet unable to admit it. Peter Firth plays Stephen Ryder, a young man who dresses like James Dean despite the year 1968. He desperately wishes to be seen as a brave hero, although he is a coward at heart. Stephanie Faracy is Angel Children, a young, overweight waitress who always projects a happy facade although her life is painfully empty.

In a separate episode, Richard and Clarisse Etheridge (Hal Linden and Lee Grant) are driving to New Orleans where Clarisse is to perform with the symphony (Please turn to page 8).

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