**MTG's A Funny Thing ... fully lives up to its name**

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, presented by the MIT Musical Theatre Guild, Sunday Sept. 9.

The Musical Theatre Guild's production of A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum is one of the funniest plays that I have seen in a long time. Despite the fact the musical portion of the production is a little thin, the cast and the audience surely make up for this. The Forum need not be an elaborating show, as the Guild demonstrates. The performers rely upon one set for background and two pianos and percussion for an orchestra. They make up for this lack of props with a rich array of comic versatility. The humor ranges from subtle jabs, to off-color jokes, to outright slapstick.

The play is performed directly to the audience instead of at it. Continuity is preserved by the wily Pseudolus, played by Brad Walters. He is a slave whose motivations are not always clear, but who provides one of the thin veins of plot for the company to follow. The interpretation of Pseudolus is beautifully in character. He has a voice that is perfectly suited to the role, and he makes the most of his opportunities. He is an actor booming it up for the benefit of his master, the soldiers, or anyone else, including the audience.

The other character with comparable exposure is Hysterium, the household's slave-in-chief, played by Chad Shipley. Hysterium is easily the most flexible character in the play, and Shipley's characterization reflects this. He demonstrates excellent versatility as Hysterium in turn must be a preening slave, reluctant eunuch, or tittering transvestite (of sorts).

The other performers provide a strong supporting cast, although perhaps that is a misnomer. The play really doesn't single out any one part; everyone contributes. Perhaps Kerry Zukor's depiction of Hero, Pseudolus' master, is somewhat wooden, but Hero himself is somewhat wooden. Jerry Biuszalski as the egotistical Miles Gloriosus delivers a flawed performance that provides one of the thin veins of plot for the company to follow. The interpretation of Pseudolus is beautifully in character. He is an actor booming it up for the benefit of his master, the soldiers, or anyone else, including the audience.

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