Perkins mediocre in Romantic Comedy

Perkins mediocre in Romantic Comedy. Despite such impressive credentials, however, Mr. Perkins does not live up to his reputation in Romantic Comedy. Jason Carmichael admittedly is a difficult role to play; he is haughty and egotistical, yet simultaneously very insecure. Mr. Perkins’ interpretation of Jason becomes a caricature of a man. He is stiff, artificial, and runs through his lines at times. Fortunately, the play is blessed with many hilarious one-liners, which Mr. Perkins does deliver with sarcasm and great effect. But the character of Jason does not evolve as it should throughout the play. There were several critical times when Jason broke through his mask, but Mr. Perkins failed to exploit these in any meaningful way. His Jason is a distinctly unlikeable person, whose only saving quality is his biting wit.

The other lead, Phoebe Craddock, is played by Mia Farrow, whose United States film credits include Peyton Place, The Great Gatsby, and Rosemary’s Baby. Farrow does a marvelous job with her part. Phoebe begins the play as a shy woman musing over her hero; at first her work is very dependent upon him, but she gradually develops her own talent as well as her own personality. She is naive, generous to a fault, and yet still very human. Mia Farrow redefines much of this essential person in Phoebe; the result is a pleasing personality who grows strong and yet remains ever vulnerable to Jason’s acid comments. Notable among the other roles is Blanch Bailey, played by Carole Cook, and Leo Janowitz, portrayed by Greg Mullavey. Blanch Bailey is an older woman who is Jason’s motherly manager; her light wit and clear perception of what is happening adds a delightful touch to the play. Leo Janowitz is Phoebe’s husband; he is simple, down-to-earth and quite blunt. These two, along with Jason’s wife Kate Malloy (Deborah May), not only fill out the action but frequently provide revealing insights into the characters of Jason and Phoebe.

Romantic Comedy was written by Bernard Slade, and in its Boston appearance is directed by Joseph Hardy. The play itself is well-written and at times captivating; its main weakness seems to be a lack of continuity. The action in the play, instead of flowing together, is linked by abrupt transitions that are at times confusing. An artificial order seems to be imposed upon the plot by Mr. Slade. The moralizing about the virtues of friendship at the end of the play in particular did not seem to fit. One of the strong points of the play, though, was that it was uniformly funny. The one line jests, as well as the more complicated jokes, are excellent; at times they detracted from the progress of the plot, yet they were still very amusing. Mr. Perkins’ deadpan delivery of his sarcastic remarks was truly the high point of his performance.

The entire play takes place in Jason Carmichael’s townhouse. The set is excellent. Jason’s study is a realistic yet very well done replication of an elegant, tastefully furnished New York penthouse. An atmosphere is thus created that reveals a lot about Jason and Phoebe. This mood is complimented by the theatre itself; the Colonial Theatre is a well-kept, beautiful playhouse that provides one of the best stages in Boston to see a play on. Despite its failings, Bernard Slade’s Romantic Comedy is a good source of amusing entertainment if one chooses not to look too deeply. The play is proof that having famous, established actors does not necessarily guarantee high-calibre acting.

— Joseph Krist

on the town

Movies

Frenzy, the Midnite Movie, Saturday, October 28, second floor of the Student Center. This week’s LCS lineup:

Fool Play, Fri., 7 & 10, 26-100.

On the Waterfront (Classic), 7-30, 10-250.

Diamonds Are Forever, Sat., 7 & 10, 26-100.

Duck Soup, Sun., 6:30 & 9, 26-100.

Theatre

Gilda Radner — Live from New York opens at the Music Hall in a six-performance engagement beginning Wednesday, October 24 at 8pm; other performances on Thursday and Friday, October 25 & 26 at 8pm. Saturday, October 27 at 7 & 10pm, and Sunday, October 28 at 7pm. Tickets are $15, $12.50 and $10, and are available at all major ticket outlets.

Music

Jean-Lee Ponty at the Orpheum Theatre, Friday November 1 at 7:30pm; tickets $8.50 & $7.50

Sprygrogs at the Berklee Performance Center, Saturday, November 3 at 7pm; tickets $7.50.

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Monday, November 5th

On Campus Interviews

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