Dramashop overpowered by Superman

MIT Dramashop presents George Bernard Shaw’s Man and Superman at the Harvy Pudding Theatre.

MIT Dramashop is presenting George Bernard Shaw's Man and Superman in its spring production, and although the play itself generates great appeal and the cast manages some fine moments, this production can only be described as a failure. Due to inadequate rehearsal or, for whatever reason, the Dramashop version suffers from its usual unwavering dullness and lack of interpretive power.

Shaw billed his play “a comedy and philosophy,” and indeed, Man and such Shavian epics as Major Barbara practically invented a new comic genre in which Shaw would remain interesting through four acts and zany and humorous productions, and often professes his Shakespeare, Kevin Cunningham

Advanced views.* And of course there is Shalw’s about its points concerning the help it.”

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No one in the Dramashop cast could pull off this consistently. Although there is certainly talent in these actors, the full realization of a play of this nature is still beyond their collective grasp. Anne Ar- ringe (Anne Whitefield) has considerable stage presence — the performance energy seems to pick up wherever she enters. But the milieu too heavily on a limited (and con- trived) vocabulary of devilish glances and mischievous half-smiles to make herself appear more youthful. She inevitably sadness the injustice which her character needs to remain interesting through four acts and sustain the weight of philosophical rumina- tion designed on her by the male members of the cast. Albert Ruegse, as John Tanner, is likewise on the right track but sticks too closely to it: we need to feel his underlying. 

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Albert Ruegse, as John Tanner, is likewise on the right track but sticks too closely to it: we need to feel his underlying attraction to Anne or the ending remains incredible. As Don Juan, Ruegse is unfortu- nately, rather bland, and tends to deliver his speeches rhetorically rather than dramatically.

Members of the supporting cast have similar problems. Marc Chediner is ap- propriately stuffy as Anne’s guardian and Victorian parson, but Kevin Cur- ningham, as Anne’s suitor, Tavy, never manages the conviction that his obses- sively nervous role demands. A subject concerning an illicit marriage seems to have been left largely underrubbed, and as Susan Downing and Billy Bryant, either through inadequate direction or their own fault of imagination in their roles, are left hanging with characters whose moral posi-

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