

'Pippin' takes Kresge by storm

Pippin, Stephen Schwartz's musical comedy, directed by Catherine Bernhard, is playing in the Little Theatre of Kresge Auditorium September 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13.

Not many people can become a scholar, a soldier, a radical, a king, an artist, a churchman, and a lover, all within the space of a lifetime. But this near impossibility convincingly takes place in the MIT Musical Theatre Guild's extraordinary production of *Pippin*, which opens this fall's theater season at MIT.

Pippin is a delightful musical that follows a man's search for a meaningful existence. The eldest son of Charlemagne, Pippin returns from his university education at Padua restless and eager to challenge the world. His lofty ideals are toppled one by one, however, when he comes to grips with the cruel realities of life. He eventually falls in love with a rich widow who owns a large country estate, comes to appreciate the value of his ordinary circumstances, and chooses a commonplace life over the great and spectacular after which he once

aspired.

In the MIT production, Bill Glickman '83 does an exceptional job of bringing the title role alive. His glittering eyes and infectious enthusiasm keep the play moving from start to finish. Another fine job of acting is done by the Leading Player, Anne Fisher, who fills in the gaps in Pippin's story with an excellent voice and some marvelous dancing. Special mention should also be made of Brad Walters, whose portrayal of Charlemagne sparkles with his clever wit and humorous touch.

The performance is remarkably fast paced, though the lack of an intermission makes the play an exhausting experience for the audience. The set is used in a number of clever ways, and the choreography of the musical numbers is first rate. *Pippin* is a musical noted for several highly symbolic and difficult to stage scenes; one example would be the portrayal of Charlemagne's war against the Visigoths. MTG successfully pulls off these scenes with great effect. The play is also in-

terspersed with several humorous sidetracks; Pippin's perky grandmother, played by Phyllis Levine, ends up drawing the entire theatre into her highly entertaining song of advice to her grandson.

Another noteworthy feature of *Pippin* is its outstanding musical score. The singing by all the members of the MTG cast is excellent, but unfortunately the musical accompaniment for the songs is almost inaudible at times. This problem arises from the fact that the instruments are located behind the stage. This music, soft to begin with, is simply unable to penetrate when the curtains are closed and the action is out in front.

Despite these minor problems, the net result of the MTG's efforts is one of their best presentations in recent years. *Pippin* is a very entertaining and funny play that makes its point in a rather subtle manner. It is worth seeing not only as a sharp theatrical production, but also as an instructive tale about an idealist face to face with the real world.

Joe Kristl



Charlemagne (Brad Walters) advises Pippin (Bill Glickman '83) about the rigors of battle. (Photo by Rick Parker)

ON THE TOWN

MIT

MOVIES

The MIT Musical Theatre Guild is proud to present *Pippin*, Stephen Schwartz's widely acclaimed musical comedy about Charlemagne's son's search for personal fulfillment. Performances are at 8pm September 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13 and 2pm September 6. Tickets are \$4.50, or \$2.50 with MIT ID. For reservations and information, call 253-6294. There will also be a special free freshman matinee performance September 7 at 3:30 pm.

Off the Wall presents a double opening on Wednesday, September 3. *Off the Wall* (the cinema) returns to Central Square (15 Pearl Street) and presents, in celebration of its opening, *Off the Wall* (the movie). Visible proof that a big budget and established stars aren't necessary to produce an intelligent, entertaining feature, the movie runs daily at 6:20, 8:10, 10pm, plus 4:30pm Sat. & Sun., and midnight Fri. & Sat.

This week's LSC lineup:

American Graffiti Fri. at 7 & 9:30 in Kresge.

Oh, God! Sat. at 7 & 9:30 in Kresge.

Doctor Strangelove Sun. at 6:30 & 9 in 26-100.

THEATER

The American Repertory Theatre announces its first scheduled production of its 1980-81 season. William Shakespeare's

comedy *As You Like It*, opening September 11 and running through October 18. For ticket information, call 547-8300.

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The Last Minstrel Show, a full scale musical production, will have its pre-Broadway tryouts at the Charles Playhouse beginning September 7. Performances Tues.- Fri. at 8pm; Sat. at 6:30 and 9:30pm; Sun. at 3 and 7:30. For more information and reservations, call 426-6912.

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Student Center Room 353

Morss Dining Hall (Walker Memorial)

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7:00pm

7:00pm

7:30pm

7:30pm