Play Strindberg

Friedrich Dürrenmatt, known for his anti-establishment views and often controversial works, wrote a play about a tragic marriage. "Play Strindberg," presented by MIT Dramashop, is an adaptation of August Strindberg's "The Dance of Death," a play about a tragic middle-class marriage. Instead of having three to five acts with several scenes in each, Dürrenmatt organizes the play into twelve rounds, each containing a boxing match, complete with a bell at the beginning and end of each round. The play, which takes place in a single room, begins with Edgar's (G. Albert Ruesga '81) army captain never promoted to major, and Alice (Susan Wiegand) meeting for the first time. Alice, the wife, sleeps with Kurt to exact her revenge. The play progresses from round 1 through round 12, where we question just how ill the plot of each round decreases. In the first three rounds of this nuptial boxing match are rather uncomfortable. Dürrenmatt's adaptation is intended to be a witty commentary on the plethora of plays about tragic marriages, yet Alice and Edgar deliver each other hard verbal blows; punches so hard they cut without the least dramatic elegance. The insults sound too real, reminding one of the all-too-real domestic scenes between Taylor and Burton in Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" What Alice and Edgar say, and more importantly, how they deliver their lines, pulls the audience into their arguments. The delivery of all this innecessary daring is also tragic to be comical, allowing no distance in which to see the humor, albeit black. The two repeat and invert each others' words, contradict each other, and leave increasingly longer pauses between their heated exchanges. As the play progresses, however, it becomes more enjoyable to watch. In round 2, "Company at Last," Kurt (Pat Byrne '85), Alice's cousin, enters and stays the distance. He completes what becomes an increasingly involved love triangle. Edgar appears the block-headed military man who gets stuck on an isolated island, and Alice the sacrificing wife who has had to endure his failures. The play progresses from this stage in round 3, where we learn Edgar is very ill, to the last rounds where we question just how ill Edgar is and just how faithful and sacrificing Alice is. She hides food from Edgar for herself, and, feeling betrayed by her husband, sleeps with Kurt to exact her revenge. The play's action begins one evening and continues through the next evening, ending very much as it began.

Jonathan P. Dippert

Technique 1983

Technique 1983, the yearbook of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Volume 99. "October 19, 1982 -- Technique 1983 makes its first deadline." "October 20, 1982 -- Technique 1982 becomes available." "Gee, I hope I receive this book before I am 30." First the good news: Graduating seniors need not worry. Technique 1983 is available of personality; a study in lackluster traits will be more than a set of mouths and noses that only a parent could love, or even recognize. The long-winded left-wing interviews have been exchanged in favor of the redesigned rosters and activities section, and the self-indulgent photo essays have been replaced with more MIT-related sections. In short, Technique 1982 is once more a conventional yearbook. And now the bad news: It's too conventional. The editors of Technique 1983 have produced a yearbook devoid of personality, a study in lackluster sections. In short, Technique 1983 is a conventional yearbook. For all its shortcomings, however, Technique 1983 fulfills its primary role -- a chronicle of the year at MIT -- most admirably. Its timeliness and desire to please everyone results in a yearbook that can excite no one. Absolutely no risks were taken: The book contains no color photos, no section dividers, and precious few photos of the community in which we live. The statements printed throughout the senior portrait section were run anonymously, a practice that contradicts the reasons for their inclusion, namely "an effort to personalize Technique 1983." Attributing the statements would have attached a personal quality to what otherwise remains a sea of faces.

David Shaw

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Play Strindberg

By Friedrich Dürrenmatt, presented by MIT Dramashop, produced by Owen Doyle '83, directed by David Waggert '81, at Kresge Auditorium May 3, 6, 7.

Dürrenmatt's Play Strindberg is a comic adaptation of August Strindberg's The Dance of Death, a play about a tragic middle-class marriage. Instead of having three to five acts with several scenes in each, Dürrenmatt organizes the play into twelve rounds as in a boxing match, complete with a bell at the beginning and end of each round. The play, which takes place in a single room, begins with Edgar (G. Albert Ruesga '81), an army captain never promoted to major, and Alice (Susan Wiegand) meeting for the first time. Alice, the wife, sleeps with Kurt to exact her revenge. The play progresses from round 1 through round 12, where we learn Edgar is very ill, to the last rounds where we question just how ill Edgar is and just how faithful and sacrificing Alice is. She hides food from Edgar for herself, and, feeling betrayed by her husband, sleeps with Kurt to exact her revenge. The play's action begins one evening and continues through the next evening, ending very much as it began.

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