ClapTrap is Laugh Trap

Claptrap by Ken Friedman, directed by Robert Drivas; American Repertory Theatre at the Hasty Pudding Theatre.

If you want to laugh painfully, go to Ken Friedman's Claptrap at the Hasty Pudding. This is a part of the company's repertory series, and a very silly one. There is no actor who can never get a role, and a writer who spends years working in real versions of "page one," and is unable to progress to page two.

For the actor, the world comes down to "love, murder and random homosexuality." When he gets caught in an elevator with a CBS mogul, and clinches a deal to cement Claptrap as a comedian, he exclaims with total disarray: "I'm art." When he gets caught in an elevator months ago, he exclaims with total disarray: "I'm art." When he gets caught in an elevator months ago, he exclaims with total disarray: "I'm art." When he gets caught in an elevator months ago, he exclaims with total disarray: "I'm art.

Ken Friedman is, above all, a master of language. He constructs mad situations with the most imaginative use of words in ways which grab you where. Once on contact, and secondly — a second later once you're caught in the strangulation of the inevitable laugh, to make you almost choke on the mug. The scene when the actor enters the writer's chicken shop funeral parlor thinking he's arrived for a play audition is a particular gem of feces. The words used by the actor fit the world of the "funeral," promoting unlimited and wonderful misunderstanding.

The acting was of a consistently high standard all round. Harry S. Murphy plays Sam, the writer, making him a bumbling, hapless, and insecure. His attempts to be a funeral director were quite delicious. "My mourners are here, grinning, ready to grieve," he exclaims with the utmost indignation when the remains fail to turn up. Cherry Jones did a splendid job as his hair-brained girlfriend. Her expressions and posturing were quite riotous. Tracy Williams gave Harvey, the actor, a more than due load of airs and graces, creating a character of complexities centered on failure. Rose Arrick brought out the hysteria at the command as More: Unita Drabik as Sybil, whom Harvey meets while waiting for a bus, generated a massive laugh as the burst into the funeral to demand "not juicy ribs.

The sets by Karen Schulz were just right: The parlor, with cockroach implements still in view, man and woman signs still conspicuously in view on the bathroom doors, pastry hose to provide black for mourning and a great deal of grime, was beautifully emblematic. And the same Harvey never gets his coveted role in Dethtrap.

Claptrap is part of The Tech Performing Arts Series at the Hasty Pudding Theatre. Tickets are available for all members of the MIT community for only $5. See announcement this issue.

Jonathan Richmond