Dramashop excels — Anouilh play not to be missed

Michael Malak '89 and Julie Therie '89, the Nurse (Anjali Sastry '86), the Count's children (John Michael Shea and Emily Donaldson), the Butler, but calling chambermaid (Jean Alpers '86), and the drunken coachman (Matthew McCurry '89).

Two characters, although stereotypes, provided hilarious comic relief. The Butler (G. Albert Rueppel) performed a superb job of fake age. The make-up he wore to look well over 86 was extraordinarily well done, but it would have gone to waste were it not for his talent in acting the part. The other comic figure was that of the Police Commissioner (Brian Linden '88). Hedeserves the highest praise for his ability to maintain the melodramatic policeman attitude throughout the performance. He was consistently funny.

Perhaps you are tiring of my adulatory praise of this play. But it really was that good. However I give you a ten minute introduction here. Go stretch out in the lobby and come back to finish this review (or skip to the end for my final comments).

The most reserved of the characters is the Seminarian (Derek Clark '89). Not yet a priest, he must decide on his role in life. Clark plays this character with a fine hand. He is simultaneously timid and full of strength. A good sense of presence is required to do this well, and in this Clark was eminently successful.

The plot of the play centers around the difficulties of servant life that the two heroines of the story face. The cook, Marie Jeanne (Sus Downing Bryant '86) is angry with the world, and doesn't hide this opinion: She's as loud as she can be. Adèle, the kitchen maid (Amy Dowling Mitchell W'88) is much more reserved, but suffers from the same feelings of self-degradation because of her position as servant. Mitchell is able to transform herself from the shrieking vixen to a character full of rage.

Though straight drama, this show includes a chamber music group. At points the music overpowers the speaking voices of the actors, but this happens infrequently. The group performed the background music well, even the acting they did during the intermission exuded a sense of bravura. They were: on the flute, Astrid Kral '86, on the piano, Ella Atkins '88, on the cello Richard Gottsch '86, and the clarinetist was Michael Lauer G.

Well, here I am. I have written too much for the average person to read about a single play. In case this is the only paragraph of my review that you read, let me make clear that this is a show not to be missed. I hope that the Dramashop sells out the remainder of the show. They will enjoy the full audience and the audience will enjoy the play.

Ronald E. Becker

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