Bard's women defy men

WOMEN IN SHAKESPEARE
An evening of scenes played by the Wellesley College Shakespeare Society.
At Shakespeare House, Wellesley.
No remaining performances.

By JULIAN WEST

When the Shakespeare Society lifted their evening "Scenes of Women in Shakespeare," they must have been thinking of the players, rather than the characters. They did not eschew male characters, and consequently were able to select some of the best known, and best loved, of the Bard's scenes.

Perhaps it was a theatrical thumbed nose at Elizabethan morals for them to select some of the best known, and best loved, of the Bard's scenes.

But no Anne can dominate the scene, and Gina Wallcott's Queen of Made me fiddle in Richard III made of her Gloucester a commanding physical presence. She opted to perform with no trace of a limp or deformity, but it was her speech rather than her nature which was assertive. She found the underlying black humor in Richard's pleas, but I found it a little distracting to hear the65m in their lines.

When Anne has departed and Richard enters "was ever woman in this manner woe'd?" the line reclines "The Taming of the Shrew." It was revealing, therefore, to have the meeting between Petruchio and Katerina on the same bill, for comparison's sake.

Petruchio seemed to be mentally and physically prepared for anything. The audience loved it. When Jeanne Munson W '87 saucily lent in a costume with sleeves from which our curls made dresses, and proceeded to tackle Kate with vigorous aplomb. Her trickery ranged from flattery to sarcasm, making an event out of pronouncing such mocking phrases as "there's fire look not son." Katerina, played by Katherine Issacs W '87, was more than up to the task.

It would be interesting to see what her spunky Kate would do with a later scene. Bianca, introduced as "the more conventionally virtuous" sister, was nothing of the kind. Jennie Larkin W '87 was spiteful against her proud and angry father. When Petruchio wished to call it off, and gesticulated wildly in the background. Moments later, Baptista offered to send his daughter Katarin away at Cordelia's behest, but it was her denial which was more than one humorous moment. After learning that her daughter was in love with her suitor and a father we progress towards the emperor of Rome. Caesar Augustus sought the submission of Cleopatra to Roman rule after the death of her beloved Antony. But the Queen distrusts his promises of asylum and prefers the dignity of a painless death. We were exhorted to "enjoy the [final] scene" of " Antony and Cleopatra." At this point the costume department, which had to this point been admirable, abandoned us and we were treated to a punked-out Cherina in an old '50s dress, a character in tight ski pants, and a Roman essay with a monstrous green and orange striped getup. Golden jewelry with no motif made a nice touch on Cleopatra.

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Katarin and Bianca go at it in The Taming of the Shrew

Lisa Robinson W '87

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