MEASURE FOR MEASURE
Written by William Shakespeare
Produced by the MIT Shakespeare Ensemble in the Sala de Puerto Rico.
Performances April 24, 25, 26, 28 at 8 p.m.
By JULIAN WEST

SHAKESPEARE'S DARK COMEDY of sexual politics, corruption and severe punishment opened on the Bard's 423rd birthday in the Sala de Puerto Rico. The MIT Shakespeare Ensemble has prepared a visual treat for the audience. While there are plenty of laughs, the sexual and political machinations are clear of "Dallas"-style melodrama and deep down into the dark corners of the play.

As we have come to expect, the Shakespeare Ensemble found the meaning behind their speeches, and added new twists to a few lines. In this case it helped that the subject is one MIT students can relate to: sex.

In the main plot, Claudia has knocked up his girlfriend Juliet; perversely, this seems to be a capital offense. The Duke, a gentleman with an overactive musole - his topic - which is liable to get him into trouble, and as Friedemann plays it is not above laughing at it. Yet the Duke is haunted by fear of being irresistible straight face, and Friedemann presents us with a lovable rogue in creased.

In the more substantial role of the Duke, Joshua Lubert "achieves himself nobly. His predisposition to broad humor is given too few reign once or twice, such as the sight gag about a prisoner's speech and the overzealous making of his face in one scene. The Duke should have a better poker face when going about incognito; he loses his temper more than a little. It would have been better to save such human behavior for his final jab at Lucio, when it would fetch a bigger laugh out of insincerity. But Lubert is very funny, and it is hard to fault him for making the most of his talent. He handles his final speech well, and at his unmasking deftly reveals himself to all on stage before any in the audience.

The key, corrupted Angelo (Carl Kuenzel) and the equally cold Isabella (Mary Ann Loria W '89), plug in a twisted sense, opposite another. They are both at their best in the one great confrontational scene in which he confounds her with his lust and his threats. Kuenzel is tight in thatologic points at once. Isabella has both terrified and horrified by his ad

Frequently, one can only be sure that "Measure for Measure" is a comedy because everyone gets married at the end. The Ensemble, right cars, plays up the humor in a general mood of history through which the dark underside of Vienna shows the more starkly.

Leading the comic charge is Bjoren Davis '88 as Pompey, a downshifter, a master of slapstick who dashes about the stage making ridic tons and sub mits in the tradition of a police state evidently run by the Keystone Cops. His reaction to Lucio's longleaders are laughing through a long speech about steward proved, which would otherwise mean nothing to most of the audience.

His follows Lucio. An inedible character adequately named "a fantas tic" by Shakespeare has even more trouble confining his antics to the Sala stage, in that Julio Friedmann '88 has longer legs. Lucio is a gentleman with an overactive musole - his topic - which is liable to get him into trouble, and as Friedemann plays it is not above laughing at it. Yet the Duke is haunted by fear of being irresistible straight face, and Friedemann presents us with a lovable rogue in creased.

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Another woman who plays stronger character than she is written in Juliet (Anna La Flamme '88), the young lover whose unpleased pregnancy is the cause of all the trouble. When the conference has been opened for her unlawful act, La Flamme makes it pretty clear that Fader isn't serious in the least and would do it all over in a minute. The failure of love is in her face, and she cries out against the harsh law more eloquently than any lamentation.

Others pleaded against the law with their own eloquence. Mariana (Wendy Cothran '89) does not come into her own until the final scene, when she makes her plea with quiet passion, Andrea McClinney '87, as the奔赴 Mistress Overdone, is as much as anyone the social conscience of the play, and reacts feelingly to the news of Claudio's visitation and, as the prisoner's own.

After the comic levity and pessimism of the first acts, the play starts to bog down when it turns to more plot development. The second half begins after a touching musical interlude courtesy Costanza and La Flamme - slowly, inlivened only by the excesses of the executioner's sons. But all is well by the time of the cost-of-shoals of Act V.

But when things get slow, we can always admire the beautiful costumes. Designer Leslie Coozen Hall has costume herself with those costumes, which calls it a "tour through costume history with a level of Star Trek overlaid." Apart from a unit color scheme of black and pur ples denoting both love and lust, she has let her imagination run wild and the results are spectacular. Lucio's garb suit is in a delight, at are Mistress Overdone's volumes of black skirts.

Representatives of both Church and State, their regal and ecclesiastical purple having been usurped, resort to austere blacks and greys. Angelo's costume is a delight, as are Mistress Overdone's the play is written on the faces of the actors. As we have come to expect, the Shakespeare Ensemble found the meaning behind their speeches, and added new twists to a few lines. In this case it helped that the subject is one MIT students can relate to: sex.

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