AS YOU LIKE IT

Directed by Andrew Borthwick-Leslie '87. Produced by the Project for Summer Student Theatre, Keene Little Theatre, July 16, 17, 18.

BY BARBARA MASI

Susan Berests of free-flying energy in the form of actions specifically tapping up the sides as you, pure streaks of color and line forming the scenery, wonderfully fast-paced, spiritual interpretations of acting, costuming, and music. Such a description could only fit The Project for Student Summer Theatre's production of "As You Like It."

The choices made by director Andrew Borthwick-Leslie '87 were bizarre, crazed, but always extraordinarily original, and, in the final analysis, fit perfectly within the political, sibling, sexual, and romantic rivalry themes of the play.

Borthwick-Leslie drew primarily on but did not altogether let go of techniques he has used in previous productions of As You Like It. The music. Such a description could only fit the form of action in the play, and not a full production. It was written for harpsichord, but was transcribed for harp and guitar. Nothing pleases them more than to sit around singing melancholy folk tunes, which, also, greatly pleased Jacques, or to listen to a country fiddler play. Nothing pleases them as much as a performance of the banished Duke all double-crossing, all driving their suits off. Clown is in 17th century courtier dress. Frederick's wrestler, brought laughter simply by his appearance — a Long Island clown, in every deftly delivered line and scene. McGimsey dances round the other actor stationed in front of the curtain — a white curtain, in fact, which, to make matters worse, drained the set of all color and interest. It appeared as if the actors felt so constrained by the tiny space available to them for movement that their scene and character interpretations were strangled. At times, it seemed that the actors, hardly moving an arm or leg, were simply performing a taped reading of the play and not a full performance.

Bright moments of humor and insight rarely failed, but when they did, they sparkled out from the dull half: John Wolf's braveness, bravery, Charles, Duke Frederick's wrestler, brought laughter simply by his appearance — a Long Island clown, in every deftly delivered line and scene. McGimsey dances round the other actor stationed in front of the curtain — a white curtain, in fact, which, to make matters worse, drained the set of all color and interest. It appeared as if the actors felt so constrained by the tiny space available to them for movement that their scene and character interpretations were strangled. At times, it seemed that the actors, hardly moving an arm or leg, were simply performing a taped reading of the play and not a full performance.

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