JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR
MIT Musical Theatre Guild
Written by Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice.
Directed by Larry Taylor and Terry Allenah '97.
Starring Derek A. Clark '96, Joseph E. Bondaryk G, Nelson Shaffman '92, and Nina Irani '96.
Student Center Sala de Puerto Rico. Feb. 4-6, 8 p.m.

By Joshua M. Andreason
STAFF REPORTER

The Musical Theatre Guild's production of Jesus Christ Superstar is technically sloppy and badly sung overall. It has its redeeming moments, but they are few and far between.

Jesus Christ Superstar is the Christ story as told by Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice. It begins with the moment that Judas decides to betray Christ and ends with the crucifixion. The writers take an interesting interpretation of the roles of Judas and Pilate in Christ's death, implying that they were merely pretenders of the leads. The parts of Judas and Jesus were determined long before the two came to be.

MTG's major problem with Jesus Christ Superstar is the high singing ranges expected of the leads. The parts of Judas and Jesus were written for tenors with the ability to reach very high notes, something neither Joseph Bondaryk G nor Derek Clark '96 can do. They tend to break in their lines, squeaking, or even speaking the parts that were meant to be sung in the upper tenor range. This sounds bad at best and simply ridiculous at worst, ruining many of the numbers. Ryan Caveney '96 as Simon also has trouble singing the higher notes in his song. All three sing quite well within their capacities, particularly Clark, but the range proves too much for them. Ryan Caveney '96 as Simon also has trouble singing the higher notes in his song. All three sing quite well within their capacities, particularly Clark, but the range proves too much for them.

The leads who can sing their parts are excellent, though. Nina Irani '96 as Mary Magdalene and Robert Wickham '93 as Pilate sing acceptably, though not as well as they should. Where the leads can sing the appropriate passages, they do so, and the rest of the cast does not disappoint. All performances are solid basses, and Nelson Shaffman '92 as Caiphas and Kathryn Couser W '94 as Annas can not sing low enough. They sing the appropriate passages up an octave rather than try to croak out the lower notes. This makes the songs smooth, but the low notes are meant to be low, and singing them up an octave detracts from the intended effect.

There is a problem with the microphone setup, which is not good. The main problem is the placement of the microphones. The front of the cast is connected to a personal microphone while the other performers are solid basses. The pit orchestra plays the ascending rip tartly and very effectively. Both were expressive and acted their singing lines with impressive skill.

The technical aspects of this production, specifically the microphone setup, are ultimately responsible for the ruined performance. For most of the musical, Judas and Jesus have personal microphones while the other performers rely on standard mikes distributed about the stage. Anyone without a personal mike either has to stand in place to sing his lines or move about and fade in and out of the amplifiers.

Either effect is annoying. For "Everything's Alright," Mary clings to Jesus for most of the song in order to sing into his personal mike. Even then she fades in and out at some movement is attempted. This is not as bad as it. In one scene, a group of reporters shout questions out to Jesus. Again, most are able to project their lines into Jesus' personal mike, but one of the reporters is too short and her line is lost altogether.

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