The ARTS

Introspective play wonderfully realized by Dramashop

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR
MIT Dramashop
Directed by Alan Brody
Written and directed by Tom Weisbord
Starring Tom Westcott '93, Andrew Kraft '95, and Emily Prenner '93
Kresge Little Theatre, Feb. 11 to 13, 8 p.m.

The MIT Dramashop's latest production, "SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR," is a very introspective performance of a very introductory nature. The play considers the point of drama and the point of life by questioning how real the characters on a stage are. The play starts out by depicting a play rehearsal. House lights are up and everything is made as real as possible. The actors call each other by their actual names and try on many costumes at once, as it would be at an informal rehearsal. Even the presence of the audience is played. The director (Tom Weisbord '93) looks out at the audience and says, "What are you doing here?" The stage manager (Michelle Stur '94) replies, "You said we could bring friends." In essence, then, every- one in the entire theatre is playing a role.

At this point, the six characters emerge from a supply closet. They were created by an author who then refused to bring them to life by finishing his work. These characters are not to be confused with the stage lights. The author, having to finish telling their story, they convince the director to abandon his original project and take on their story, bringing about several conflicts that examine the nature of drama.

This production is brilliantly directed. The customizations made to the script to set the play within the play at MIT are very well done. The characterizations of the acting and technical companies and their interactions seem very normal and usual, which emphasizes the dichotomy between the real company and the six characters.

The acting is good on the whole. Both Westcott and Emily Prenner '93 give stellar performances. They are fluent and very prop- erly motivated for the characters they portray - often a difficult thing with all the circular thinking and impossibilities woven into the plot. Andrew Kraft '95 had a more difficult time with his part. He has an awkward stage presence, either leaving his arms at his sides or using them in stiff, pointed gestures. He speaks his lines wonderfully (despite occasional stumbling), but his body does not follow suit. The supporting cast, composed almost exclusively of undergraduates, is very strong as well.

Overall, this is a very enjoyable production. The initial sequence is very funny as the makeup acting trope tries to hold a serious rehearsal. Many things go on at once, adding to the comedic context. The antics of Eddie Kohler '95 are particularly amusing. The characterizations set up at the beginning set up the comic relief that takes place all throughout the rest of the performance, striking a nice balance as Pandora movie about his art. These musings are always thoughtful and sometimes disturbing. Always, though, the six characters to the final catharsis.

Six Characters in Search of an Author closes this weekend, running Thursday through Sunday in Kresge Little Theatre.

Adam nearly loses strong message in mediocre presentation

ADAM AND THE EXPERTS
Written by Victor Dupuis and Mike Eldredge
Directed by Troy Stiegfried
Starring Victor Dupuis and Mike Eldredge, Lynn Saunders, John Petrie, and Emily Prenner
Triangle Theater Company

Ensemble spirit, a strong message and terrific writing were unfortunately not enough to overcome the mediocre set design and technical flaws in Triangle Theater Company's "ADAM AND THE EXPERTS." Although they've been classified as alterna- tive, Adam and the Experts have been a very popular hit in New York City and his friends Sarah (Lynn Saunders), Jimmy (John Petrie) and Eddie (Mike Eldredge) have been playing their own gigs, and on March 17 at TT the Bear's. The band hopes to change, Cliffs of Dooneen are attracting more fans exclusively of undergraduates, is very strong as well.

By Thomas Westcott

"ADAM AND THE EXPERTS" is a play that chides the everyday life of Adam (Victor Dupuis), a gay male living in New York City and his friends Sarah (Lynn Saunders), Jimmy (John Petrie) and Eddie (Mike Eldredge) have been playing their own gigs, and on March 17 at TT the Bear's. The band hopes to change, Cliffs of Dooneen are attracting more fans exclusively of undergraduates, is very strong as well.

the opening scenes, Adam is enjoying life socializing with his friends at small par- ties, dinners, and when Eddie breaks the news to him. No one knows how to treat Eddie or how to deal with this illness and thus is looking for a way that begins to separate his friends as they approach death. Adam struggles desperately to instill Eddie with hope and love by sacrificing his own happi- ness to devote all of his time to Eddie.

Adam takes on more jobs to afford the many doctors and "quacks" that he thinks can cure Eddie of his ailment. Adam is a AIDS sufferer. Of the six characters to the final catharsis.

The weak performances lead to the audi- ence's confusion of whether the blackout was Adam's or was Adam's while living and in the last moments, after Eddie's death, Adam admits to The Man that he needs him and the lights fade as they embrace.

Both Dupuis and Armstrong gave strong performances and were often surpassed by the other. The last act. Kansas (Eldredge) wasn't believable until he had been rid of the second act and finally had some- thing tangible to deal with. His physical deterioration. The ensemble men and women, played by Steve Auger and Diane Saunders, often playing up the absurdity of their characters instead of committing to them and allowing the audi- ence to see the absurdity of the situation. At the same time they should be complemented on their versatility in the variety of roles that they maneuvered throughout the play.

John Petrie, as Jimmy, was not a presence on the stage and often detracted from the per- formances around him. Eldredge, who played The Man, could turn even the "straightest" arrow with his physique and sexual charge, but most of his lines sounded read-especially his chronology of Eddie's life at the end of the play.

The weak performances lead to the audi- ence's confusion of whether the blackout meant the play was over or it was first act intermission. A note about an Intermission in the program might have helped to clarify the matter for those who only began to clap after the house lights came back up and the doors were opened without a curtain call. Also much of the energy and tension that was created by the scenes was destroyed during the transi- tions. With the lights down between scenes, a poor quality recording of characters talking or conversing over the phone was played while the set was being changed, tugged, dragged, and dropped, contributing to the incoherence of the audio tape.

Despite these technical flaws, playwright Bumbalo was able to achieve a clarity in the play's messages about AIDS, friendship, and living life in the face of death; all of which are very powerful, moving, relevant, and impor- tant to both the gay and straight communities.

Cliffs generate excitement for their new album at Next House

CLIFFS OF DOONEEN
With Pusha Stew.
Next House
Jan. 29

By Anne S. Tsao

He's not Bono. And they're not Ugly Kid Joe. But they've got the generic look of all of these failures force Adam to become more frequent trips to the hospital and in the end, Adam and the Experts have been a very popular hit in New York City and his friends Sarah (Lynn Saunders), Jimmy (John Petrie) and Eddie (Mike Eldredge) have been playing their own gigs, and on March 17 at TT the Bear's. The band hopes to change, Cliffs of Dooneen are attracting more fans exclusively of undergraduates, is very strong as well.

What makes this play more than just the average AIDS play is the character of The Man (Mike Eldredge). At first, The Man rep- resents Adam's libido and pops-up in Adam's bed one night, wearing white boxers and a white robe. He attempts to entice Adam into self-satisfaction and has to battle with Adam's focus on Eddie.

Throughout the play, The Man resurfaces, sometimes at the most inappropriate times, and demands to grab Adam's attention by taunting him or using them in stiff, pointed gestures. He speaks his lines wonderfully (despite occasional stumbling), but his body does not follow suit. The supporting cast, composed almost exclusively of undergraduates, is very strong as well.

Overall, this is a very enjoyable production. The initial sequence is very funny as the makeup acting trope tries to hold a serious rehearsal. Many things go on at once, adding to the comedic context. The antics of Eddie Kohler '95 are particularly amusing. The characterizations set up at the beginning set up the comic relief that takes place all throughout the rest of the performance, striking a nice balance as Pandora movie about his art. These musings are always thoughtful and sometimes disturbing. Always, though, the six characters to the final catharsis.

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