Directed by Kim Mancuso. Written by David Henry Hwang. Starring Eugene Chiang '95, Monica Gomi '94, Jose Sia Jr. '95. Directed by Kim Mancuso.

Dramashop serves food for thought with F.O.B.

F.O.B. (or Fresh Off the Boat) is a dramatic play centered around Grace (Monica Gomi ’94) and Steve (Eugene Chiang ’95). Grace must decide between the slightly overbearing and awkward, yet charming, Steve and the cousin Dale (Jose Sia Jr. ’95) who bears a striking resemblance to Steve. Grace’s decision is complicated by her own prejudiced views and her attraction to Steve, who is said to be a beautiful, thoughtful, and appropriately vile as the bigoted Dale.

The success of this production lies in its ability to challenge stereotypes. Steve personifies Grace’s frustrations at how her American identity is defined, while Dale represents her own prejudices. Steve thus toys with the intra-race bigot while Dale seizes every chance to humiliate the F.O.B. before him. Grace barely tolerates this testosterone-filled showdown between two undesirable alternatives. Fortunately, Steve is only pretending, sadly, Dale isn’t. It is no surprise, then, that Grace accepts Steve for who he is, a beautiful, thoughtful, first-generation immigrant much like herself.

The technical aspects of the show all support the action on stage. The set design by Jacqueline Brener ’96, was basic but well dressed, and it immediately caught the attention of the audience. Amazingly, authentic Chinese restaurant smells also greeted the entering audience. The lights were effective in delineating the changes between action and soliloquy, but not always focused on the action on stage. The inappropriate modern tape player used on stage was a minor, but slightly distancing, anachronism in the production, considering that the dialog had a late seventies feel.

Of special note is the novel program design. Not only are the Director’s Notes effective in providing background for some concepts in the play, but junior Eddie Kohler’s design is a wonderful parody of a Chinese restaurant’s take-out menu. Although one cannot fully digest all that is set on stage in Dramashop’s excellent production, one still is left satisfied by the thought-provoking and entertaining feast. In any case, F.O.B. provides much food for thought. As we contemplated our dinner after the show, we realized that we couldn’t identify all the specific ingredients, but we all agreed that it tasted good as a whole.

Top Ten Most Bogus Things on Earth

1. Drugs
2. Did we mention the pop quiz?
3. Referre in Professional Wrestling
4. Imitation Cheese
5. Lawn Flamings
6. 900-DEBBY
7. Pop Quiz on Monday following major weekend
8. ‘Do Not Remove Under Penalty Of Law’ tags on mattresses
9. Cars that can talk
10. The Donut Diet

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