

Luv—Colonnades play delightful

Review by David Ware

Plays are seldom screamingly funny and at the same time sobering and thoughtful. A play that can be both is worthy of being considered for bonafide masterpiece status. One such play is Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Another is Noel Coward's *Design For Living*. Yet another is Murray Schisgal's *Luv*, which is currently playing at the Colonnades Dinner Theater.

Luv presents three sad souls caught in a repeating melancholy pattern of regret. They boast of their unfortunate childhood years, daydream about the "good old days" of college at Polyarts U and speak expansively about love.

Lost in confusion

Lost in a bog of confusion and failure, Harry Berlin is preparing (rather half-heartedly) for jumping off a bridge when college chum Milt Manville happens along, radiating happiness and prosperity. After the shock of recognition, the two exchange tales of their postcollege lives.

Milt, saddled by a wife he would like to be rid of, convinces Harry that the reason for his misfortune is his celibacy. He then throws Harry and Ellen, his slightly shopworn wife, together, and the pair gradually falls into a shallow, cliché-ridden soup they mistake for Love, the mysterious, Love, the all-consuming. Caught up in each other, they croon an atonal lovesong and fall into each other's arms, leaving Milt free to marry the girl of his dreams.

Unhappy with lot

This idyllic situation cannot last long, however, and four months later we find Milt and

Ellen both bitterly unhappy with their lot. They decide to reunite, only to realize that Harry is now so firmly entranced by his illusion of love that he is oblivious of Ellen's misery. Milt and Ellen resolve to return Harry to the suicidal state they had rescued him from at the beginning. From this decision all manner of complications ensue.

It is only a fine cast that can make this play succeed, and the Colonnades does not fail in this aspect. Lee Schoonover is an able Milt, radiating an aura of tenacious ambition and con man's guile. He struts about the stage, fastidious in the first act and full of a false cheer in the second.

Lost woman

As Ellen, Judy Hart Sperath is a convincing lost woman, with both her desperately hysteric and deliberately calm, matter-of-fact moments coming across well. She has a good physical presence, and her voice hits just the right balance between victim and victimizer.

The shining light of the show is Dick McGowan as Harry. Dumpy, paunchy, fearful and wondering, he plays Harry as a man existing in a twilight. Wandering for 15 years in search of the spark of life, Harry tries feebly to grab for a bit of love and light, only to find that it comes along with cruelty and an even darker vacuum. McGowan is a marvel in this role and remarkably consistent.

Combined with a fine dinner, this show is a dynamite entertainment package at a fair price. Even if the meal were only fair, the package would be quite attractive, and as it sits, it is close to irresistible.

Shakespeare film begins today

A Japanese version of *Macbeth* is this semester's first presentation in the Shakespeare Film Series. The movie is *Throne of Blood* (*Kumonosu-jo*), a 1957 film by Akira Kurosawa.

Kurosawa is one of the greatest of the contemporary Japanese directors and the most well known in the West. He is noted for his extremely popular samurai films like *Yojimbo* and *The Seven Samurai*, as well as others such as *The Idiot*, *Ikiru* and the classic *Rashomon*.

Throne of Blood varies only slightly from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Kurosawa directed it in the tradition of the Japanese Noh theater. It stars one of Kurosawa's favorite actors, Toshiro Mifune, as General Washizu (Macbeth). The movie is almost operatic in style and contains classic examples of Kurosawa's furious, rugged violence.

Showings are at 3, 7 and 9 p.m. today and Saturday in the Sheldon Art Gallery Auditorium. Admission is \$1.25.

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