

'Major Barbara' . . .

Continued from Page 8

The gun factory setting for Act III is less pleasing with a painted backdrop suggesting the Emerald City and the Three Mile Island towers — the attempt at unreality isn't unreal enough.

For most "Major Barbara" playgoers, Act II is the really enjoyable (though least thematically complex) act. Rummy Mitchens (Susan Conover) and Snobby Price (Timothy Mooney) trade advice on how to convince the Salvation Army people one is really wicked. These are definitely not what another

Shaw character calls "the deserving poor."

The addition of other characters adds a more serious dramatic element to the second act with Andrew Undershaft destroying his daughter's faith by buying the hitherto incorruptible Salvation Army. Barbara takes off her badge and pins it on him. The union of the Salvation Army and arms manufacturers has taken place and they have a common slogan: "Blood and fire!"

French is forceful in presenting Undershaft as a cool and witty Mephistopheles, whose materialism

he frankly shares with anyone, and whose love of power he shares with Major Barbara and her would-be finance, Adolphus Cusins (Todd Nelson), a professor of Greek.

One begins to agree with Lady Britomart: "Stop making speeches, Andrew. This is not the place for them!" However, Major Barbara and her love do succumb to the Prince of the Powers of the Air — perhaps overwhelmed by French's pleasing use of rhetoric.

V.J.s . . .

Continued from Page 8

MTV also gives the artist a chance to put the finished work in a conducive setting, she said.

"It places music in an environment that's appropriate for them," she said. "You know what you're going to get when you go for it."

To be sure, MTV is the place that established bands want to be and, as groups like Men At Work and Stray Cats can attest, an absolute necessity for those looking to break into the big time.

Men At Work's debut album, *Business As Usual* went unnoticed until "Who Can It Be Now?" broke on MTV. Stray Cats' lead singer and guitarist Brian Seltzer has been quoted often as saying that MTV and college radio stations were the initial cogs in the group's now giant wheel.

"We felt we were there at definitely the right time for these bands," Binford said.

These are testimonies to the power and success of MTV, as are four other tangible results of the WASEC brainchild.

First, numbers. As of Sept. 15, MTV scored 1,950 affiliates and 15 million subscribers. Local estimates indicate MTV visually rocks 15,265 homes in Lincoln.

Honors abundant

Awards also are a good indicator of doing something right. MTV escaped with a handful of CLIO awards, which honor excellence in advertising. Most of the CLIOs were for the animated breaks which are seen periodically through the hour. Special recognition for MTV's on-air graphics was offered by the International Animation Film Association. The 1982 International Film and TV Festival Awards gave up medals for on-air promotions and "MTV Extra" and "Linernotes," series that feature conversations with artists.

Someone once said that the most sincere form of flattery is imitation. Ask NBC about "Friday Night Videos."

Ask Ted Turner about "Night Tracks." Ask . . . well, it is evident that everybody is sprinting to jump on the MTV bandwagon.

"We look at them as outlets for video music," Binford said. "If they're done well we look at them as promotional. They whet the appetite of the audience."

She said MTV suffers no identity crisis over these other video offerings.

"MTV is kind of like Kleenex," said Binford. "No matter (what brand) you reach for, it's not facial tissue, it's Kleenex."

"It's the same way with MTV. It's not video music, it's MTV."

Finally, with anything popular, it becomes just as popular to find something wrong with it. Racism and sexism are the most frequent charges leveled at MTV. It must be noted that these two handfuls of mud also have been hurled at rock 'n' roll in general.

No racists here

"We certainly do not like and we disdain the claim that we are racist," Binford said. "We play black music that is rock 'n' roll, we play red music that is rock 'n' roll and we play green music that is rock 'n' roll."

The claim is "driving me crazy" said Quinn.

"I don't see Rick James (who harangues MTV with the racism charge at every opportunity) complaining he's not on the country channel. Willie Nelson doesn't call complaining he's not on MTV."

Sexism? Quinn puts it this way: "Rock 'n' roll is probably sexist and MTV is rock 'n' roll."

The only question left to ask is "why is MTV so popular?"

"It found a real identity with the audience," Binford said. "It filled a void for people who love TV and people who love rock 'n' roll."

Perhaps Davin Say put it best in the April 1983 issue of *Ampersand* when he wrote, "MTV is the most successful concoction of pop music and TV since Dick Clark asked us to rate-a-record."

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