

Frantically paced 'Light' wears out its audiences

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understand the brilliance of the creation. The once-loyal team of leading lady, playwright, producer and director quickly divides as it looks for a place to lay the blame.

Hart wants to expose the quirks and eccentricities of those in show biz. In the process, he uses every stock character in the book, from the overly dramatic leading lady to the overly flamboyant Broadway director.

Paul Schmieding presents the most real portrayal in the show in the character of Owen Tanner, a fellow playwright and sympathetic friend. Schmieding's soft, reflective delivery and intimate gestures provide a welcomed contrast to the other characters' storm of hysteria.

After Schmieding, Leta Powell Drake offers the most natural performance. In the role of Stella Livingston, Drake becomes Phyllis Diller in the flesh. With her gravelly voice and resonating laugh, Drake brings Irene's petulant mother to life. Drake has a natural stage presence and achieves a delicate balance between slap-happy comedy and reality.

Theatre Preview

The Facts

What: "Light Up The Sky"
Where: Lincoln Community Playhouse
When: Jan. 27-31, Feb. 3-7
Cost: \$23 for adults on Thursdays and Sundays
 \$25 for adults on Fridays and Saturdays
 \$9 for students
The Skinny: A cast of eccentric show biz people deal with the opening of their show

While the other actors handle their characters' eccentricities well, they fail to maintain the symmetry Drake and Schmieding achieve.

Scott Glen plays Carelton Fitzgerald, the emotional director who cries about everything. This part calls for exorbitant flamboyance, but Glen's excessive sobbing loses its humor as the play progresses.

James Cliber plays Sidney Black, the tough-talkin' producer who sounds as if he should be hawking stolen goods instead of Broadway plays. With the panache of a small-time Mafioso, Cliber walks the turned-out strut of a wise guy and contrasts his streetwise

accent with talk of fine art and poetry. However, at times of intense anger or emotion, Cliber sometimes garbles his words. He also punches his lines like a crazed boxer, wearing out the audience with his tension and ill-humor.

Kristi Filarski Wilson plays Irene Livingston, the drama queen starring in this seemingly ill-fated show. Wilson handles the over-the-top emotional scenes well, but her Ricki Lake attitude seems inappropriate and stale by the end of the show.

The production is not completely lacking in substance. Dawn Schaefer's art deco set gives the play an air of sophistication and adds to the glitz and glamour associated with the world of theater.

The play, which first premiered in 1948, also includes some rewrites by the show's artistic team. The inclusion of contemporary political banter and theater jokes about "Les Miserables" was tasteful and made the rather trite plot fresher.

"Light Up the Sky" succeeds as an energetic, light-hearted romp. However, its whipped, sugary zaniness can tire out an audience.

Kilmer discovers vision in 'Sight'

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never had to deal with before.

He starts with a simple question: "What's this?" Sacks asks.

After Virgil takes it from his hands and holds it a moment, he replies "An apple."

"What's this?" Sacks questions, this time holding up a magazine with a photograph of an apple on it.

"An apple," Virgil replies again. "Is it an apple or a picture of an apple?"

It's through dialogue like this that the basic dichotomy of the film is illustrated - the difference between seeing and perceiving.

Virgil may see something, but

that doesn't mean he's actually perceiving it. The fact that Kilmer can portray this so effortlessly makes up for the major weakness of the film - Sorvino.

Even an actor with an Oscar is allowed to have a bad film. This is it. Sorvino just crashes through much of the film with a deeply blank look on her face.

It is a shame, because director Irwin Winkler knows his medium well. Lingering shots of Virgil feeling the setting sun while blind, as well as slow pans across the cityscape after Virgil has regained his sight help transform a narrow view of the world to the wide open sense of truly seeing.

"At First Sight" isn't a film that

Film Review

The Facts

Title: "At First Sight"
Stars: Val Kilmer, Mira Sorvino, Kelly McGillis, Nathan Lane
Director: Irwin Winkler
Rating: PG-13 (brief nudity, strong language)
Grade: B
Five Words: "First Sight" about truly seeing

will last forever as a masterpiece of modern cinema, but it does make for nice viewing.

And appreciating the view happens to be what the film is all about.

Exhibit used to give art students focus

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York School art.

"I think what he's doing is great," Mamiya said. "I've haven't been able to use a large exhibit for my classes like Dan is doing."

"We've been limited to small-group study in small areas of exhibits."

Mamiya, who teaches modern art, said she believes the Sheldon makes a strong effort to be a part of university classes.

However, she said the difficulties of scheduling class work in accordance with exhibits at the gallery makes an effort like Siedell's "very hard to do."

A graduate of Yale and UCLA, Mamiya said Siedell's class will surpass attempts she has seen at other schools to incorporate locally owned art with curriculum.

"At UCLA, exhibitions at local museums were used as part of class projects," Mamiya said. "It's rare to see an exhibit as large as the New York School incorporated within a class with such a tight focus."

"Hopefully, this is the start of many other classes using the gallery in a similar fashion."

Siedell said every instructor should use the resources of the Sheldon as best as possible.

"I think the gallery could be used

more by faculty, but I'm not prepared to say that it hasn't been our fault," he said. "I know we can do a better job of reaching out to more instructors."

Siedell admits that his dual position of curator of the museum and instructor at the university makes him "extremely fortunate."

"The Sheldon has one of the strongest exhibits of New York School art that I've seen on any campus," he said. "Hopefully the students will learn about this period and then want to know what happened in the 1960s with pop art and minimalism."

"I really believe this will be an opportunity for real learning to take place."



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