

Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet) Goodbye UPEI

By **MELISSA DOUCETTE**

Saturday night marked the final showing of the UPEI Theatre Society production of *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*, a play directed by Richard Thomas Haines. The play, written by Ann-Marie MacDonald, won the Governor General's award, and the combined efforts of the Theatre Society did it justice.

The main character was Constance Ledbelly, played by Jill McRae. At

first, McRae's acting was somewhat stiff, but as the night wore on, her performance improved. Her acting was complemented by her fellow performers, including Steven Forbes as a boasting Othello. Michael Farrell also turned out a strong performance as the egotistical Professor Claude Night, maintaining a perfect level of pretension. Andrea MacDonald was a bloodthirsty Desdemona, and Lindsay Kyte played a well-executed Tybalt. Peter Forbes as Iago and Nicholas

Kenny as the chorus both had perfect timing, and performances by Lana Mill, Kim Yaciuk, Erin Fagan, and Brenton Driscoll helped to complete the strong performances by the cast.

Noteworthy performances by Todd MacLean as Romeo/Romiet, Lisa Carmody as Juliet, and Mickey Acorn as the Ghost further enhanced the play. MacLean and Carmody played Romeo and Juliet as petulant and spoiled teenagers, and both displayed wonderful chemistry with the other players. A particularly memorable scene they had together was the two lovers' fight over Hector, Romeo's beloved turtle. The star-crossed lovers pulled the unfortunate pet in two, to the (sick?) delight of the audience. Acorn's presence, although brief, stole the show almost every time he came on stage.

Of course, actors can't perform without a set. The columns of Verona were particularly well done, and the sets in general were appropriately stark. James Cameron uses lavish sets to thump his audience away from dismal plots, but *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* is too good a play to resort to such distractions, and the sets were designed accordingly. The stagehands never missed a beat in changing scenes, and even managed to get involved in the play now and then.

Naturally, the actors weren't naked on stage, and their costumes were one of the high points of the play. All costumes were sewn by UPEI students Heather Ludlow, Kristen Patterson and Carolyn Knox. Each one was of a professional quality, had beautiful colours and designs, and fitted well. Also adding to the play's aesthet-

ics was the lighting, especially the garden atmosphere which was solely created by the lighting. The sound also came off without a glitch.

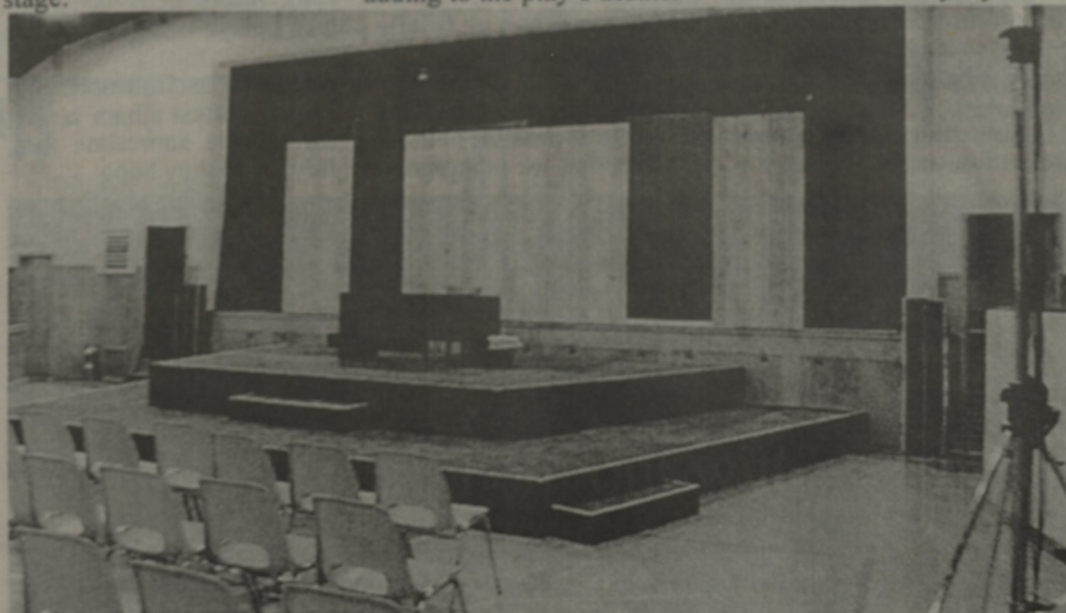
Generally speaking, Richard Haines' direction brought the play together into a coherent whole. The three different periods were well-represented, yet flexible when they interacted. The only dim point of Saturday night's performance was the first act, where the comedic elements seemed slightly off. However, the comedy came together better in later acts, particularly in Act III, which shone.

At the end of the evening, the audience expressed their pleasure with the play with enthusiastic applause, resulting in two curtain calls. All in all, *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* was a strong note for the end of the Theatre Society's year.



Hard work, before a great performance

-photo by Richard Haines



Alumni gym awaits the crowds

-photo by Richard Haines