

Play critique

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Harvey is quite an interesting play.

It qualifies a classification as a masterpiece of art. The play is a true creation and presentation of mastery of dramatic literature. I watched the show on Saturday 14th April at the queen's hall national theatre and the performance was evidently exceptional. Harvey presents the exciting story of Elwood P. Dowd. He is an aging man who is apparently suffering from a streak of schizophrenia.

The name of the play is derived from a best friend of his who is a rabbit called a pooka. The pooka is a fair that is in animal form and it is seen to appear only to a selected characters especially those that accompany him at night to social gatherings and bars. Ewood's sister Veta is however, not amused by his antics and attempts to have him admitted to a mental institution. Ewood is however, seen to be so cordial and affectionate, this makes the doctors convinced that she is actually covering up for her own mental ailment (Edward, 2003). The doctors then admit Veta into the institution.

However, the truth is finally established and people set out to look for Ewood and his invincible companion. Ewood shows up to the institution looking for his lost companion. Just before he is to be given an injection to restore him back to his senses and normalcy, Veta realizes that she would rather have Ewood remain the way he had been with his kindness, compassion to all, carefree nature and charm. The question arises on who was actually crazy in the all set up. The central idea being presented in this play is the issues of

the escaping reality. Ewood chooses an alternative form of reality when he lives in his fantasy world.

In his fantasy world of Harvey Ewood finds contentment than in the conventional life. Harvey presents the lesson that human beings are capable of choosing pleasure over pain, happiness over sorrow, and contentment over dissatisfaction (Edward, 2003). This is an idea, which I strongly agree with. The production brought this out clearly especially with the choice of characters. An example is Edgar Woodley who played the role of Ewood.

His smiles, jokes, wit and charm make the audience admire his world. The production had a good choice of characters: it is worth mentioning that Edgar Woodley as Ewood was a perfect choice with his wit, charm and grandeur. The play is designed to bring out a dramatic irony and this was well brought out through characterization. However, there were some characters, that were new on stage, for instance, Shane Batter who played the role of doctor Sanderson: her lines sometimes looked stiff but she managed to execute them. The other characters all fitted well into their roles except Maya Simpson who played the role of Veta who didn't come out assertively and was at some points inaudible. There was a smooth flow in the play, action and ideas were flowing, and there was a logical sequence of ideas (Edward, 2003).

However, it can, be made more exciting. This could be done by including more vibrant actors. This is to replace the new and shy ones for instance Maya and Shane who brought a bit of lull to the production. All the aspects of production have worked together as a whole effectively. This is more with

regard to the movements, design aspects, character interpretation and acting style. All these have effectively worked together in the build up to the themes of the play and style.

The dramatic irony and the issue of fantasy in a world of reality were well brought out in the dramatic irony around which the play revolves. This style proves effective especially because it presents us with a framework for comparison. The question is on who is actually mad. This especially coupled with a good choice of characterization presents individuals from both extremes. At the end of the performances, it was so exciting to note that no character was immune to Ewood's charms. Ewood is presented as a very comfortable and carefree character.

At the end of the play, everyone breathes a sigh of relief when Ewood escapes an injection that would have changed him. This is especially in the way he captivates not only the fellow actors but also the audience. The production was therefore very effective and exciting.