



FSU School of Theatre's THE DRESSING ROOM

A Theatre and Performance Review

Changing the Tradition: A Review of *Fiddler on the Roof*

By Tawatha Valentine: Interviews Editor

Quincy Music Theatre has once again charmed its audience with its production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. *Fiddler on the Roof* is a musical set in the small town of Anatevka, Russia in 1905 and focuses on the life of a dairyman named Tevye. Along with the rest of the community, Tevye struggles to exist under tsarist rule while trying to find suitable husbands for his three eldest daughters. The humor of the musical is intertwined with Tevye's desire to stay true to his culture's tradition and the offhanded antics of the townspeople.



Director Kevin Scott Goodson couldn't have cast this show any better. Jef Canter took the show by storm with his full-on characterization of Tevye. When onstage he commanded the audience's full attention. From his first solo ("If I Were a Rich Man") to the ending ensemble number ("Anatevka"), Canter won the audience over with his rustic charm. And what is a man without his wife? Golde, played by Karla Johnson, was an amazing complement to Tevye's rough and humorous character. Her breathtaking vocals and sarcastic humor had the audience eagerly awaiting each note and crude remark. As if that isn't enough to keep an audience flocking through the doors, the rest of the ensemble proved to be just as talented.

talented. From the overeager matchmaker to the outstanding and hilarious Russian dancers, this cast proved a force to be reckoned with. As for the cast's vocals, though a few of the male soloists fell short at times, the powerful ensemble numbers contained dynamic harmonizing.

Just as dynamic as the cast's vocals was the scenic design by Bill Mock and Kevin Scott Goodson. Their design was accurately rustic, depicting the lifestyle of the Jewish Anatevkan community. The set pieces were not too bulky, and the scene changes—done mainly by the cast—were extremely smooth, save for a small collision between two of the trees that had been moved frequently during the show. Though each scene was marked by only a few set pieces, the designers did an outstanding job establishing when we were outside, in Tevye's kitchen and bedroom, the bar, and at the train station, among many others. For example in the bedroom scene, the only set piece used was the actual bed that Tevye and Golde occupied. Even though this was the only piece visible, the stage did not feel empty, and the scene suggested a fully furnished bedroom. Goodson and Scott were able to achieve this effect with every scene.

Though the idea of less-is-more worked well for the scenic design, the costume design went the opposite route to visibly create the rural feel in each element of design. The costumes were skillfully crafted by Roberta Brewer and were a wonder for the eyes to feast upon. Though certain pieces of each costume may not have fit the time period (such as the modern day boots the cast wore as well as a few of the skirts worn by the village women), the complete costumes worked well to tie together the rural image of the time period.

The lighting design by David Jones also hit the bull's-eye in tying together the small town rustic feel of the play. He captured each scene as a perfect moment in time. He did an amazing job in aiding the audience

visually as to when Tevye went into his asides speaking to God. Jones also created a soft feel with the celebrations of the village as well as harsh lighting for the tsars. If the audience was at any time confused as to whom the good guys and bad guys were, Jones made sure to clear it up with his first class lighting scheme.



Overall, Quincy Music Theatre's production of *Fiddler on the Roof* was a hit. If you weren't able to attend this amazing production, there are a few more chances this season to experience the great theatre that Quincy has to offer. In November, QMT will be mounting *The King and I*, in February *Bye Bye Birdie*, and in April *Mame*. They are sure to be crowd-pleasers, so make certain to go out and support theatre at its best.