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*No Exit:* Enter A Vintage Hell

Scott C. Chapman’s scenic design for *No Exit* gave the set an intriguing, blank and ambiguous appearance. It looked like a hotel lobby. Everything was gray, or white, including the statue. The statue appeared the same color as the door, but was not appealing to look at. The fabric on the couches looked like fabric that would be popular in the 40s, if not a little bit older. The fabric was not extremely appealing either, although I think that was the point of Chapman’s design. I like the effect the blocked fireplace and window had, as it made the room feel and appear more claustrophobic and stuffy, especially since the characters complained of the heat so often. I wasn’t completely fond of the window placement, as I imagined that the stage was the entire room and the ceiling only went as high as the chandelier. I do think the window was a nice element, but people sitting below it couldn’t see it or its effect very well without having to twist in their chairs.

Leslie Cook-Day provided a wonderful representation of the 1940s through costume design. Each costume added personality to each character while staying within the time frame. Although he was barely in the play, I admired the Concierge’s costume design. He was dressed in a gray suit with a burgundy shirt and a flat cap. Burgundy against gray gives an evil appearance; burgundy maybe representing a toned down “traditional” hell characterized by blood and fire. The dark gray is a moody color, and the concierge seems to be moody himself, or like he has a short temper perhaps. I also like that he wore a flat cap, also known as newsboy caps. The Concierge is just a messenger, in a way. He is not the reason the other three end up where they are; he is merely a guide to tell them about the ways and rules of their eternal home. I also admired Inez’s costume design. Inez’s character in the beginning looks very smart and put together, but the more disheveled her clothes become, the more she falls apart. The burgundy jacket and pink blouse make her appear flirty, and the shoulder pads in her jacket made her seem more assertive. Her makeup defined her facial features, as her eyebrows were dark, her eyeliner was black, and her lipstick was a dark but outstanding red. Her hair was out of her face, which also enabled Inez’s expressions to be more visible. I think this was an excellent choice from Cook-Day as well, as Inez is one of the more outspoken and honest out of the trio. She makes all of her intentions and thoughts clear and known to everyone.

Chapman’s lighting design was a great element of the play. When I arrived, there was a warm yellow wash over the stage, with a gobo over a purple or blue light gel, as there were shadows across the stage in these colors. This light cue alluded to the claustrophobic feeling of the room, and when the door opened by itself, it gave the room a whimsical, yet eerie definition. Chapman perfectly captured Estelle’s character in her mood lighting. Her lighting was warm and yellow, and gave a dreamy, romantic feeling. Fitting, as she was the romantic interest of Inez and Credeau, but she was also the interest of many in her time alive. In addition, the way she talked about the people she knew on Earth made her scenes seem nostalgic. I enjoyed Jace Frank’s addition of music to her lighting as well, as it created an image in my mind of what she was watching, and made her scenes more emotional.

 Overall, I enjoyed the design elements of *No Exit.* The lights were bold, just as the trio of characters, and their costumes excellently set the time period. Although the stage was quite empty, the set dressings were perfect for the production. *No Exit* was vivid and brazen, and the design elements truly enhanced each actor and their character.

This paper was proofread and I made necessary corrections before turning it in. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_