

### Everyman

Everyman was a moral play which portrayed the attributes of death and how there is no evading it. Other major themes included materialism, appearance and how such would be left behind once each man dies. In the play, these themes were expressed through the way the main character, Everyman, was visited by death and had to go on a pilgrimage. He looked to his companions and earthly riches to go with him on the journey, but they did not agree with him. When it was time for Everyman to die, his good looks and strength were part of the things that were left behind and lost, but what remained were his knowledge till death and the good deeds that he left behind. There was also a theme about God being the controller of life after death. It could have been better portrayed in the play as that part was not as strong as it should have been. This play meant something to me as I am very religious and have the same mental idea that one day everyone will die and we will either go to heaven or hell. Seeing how death can come at anytime and how unprepared one could be make one also think of their life and their future. It makes you want to prepare now and do as many good deeds as possible and stay on course with your life. Which is what I think this play was about; to show how people thought in the past and to scare those of that time into doing good and being conscious of the future and death.

The acting articulated the theme well because even though they spoke in old english but dressed in modern attire, the message was still pretty clear. The actors were able to relate with the audience and allow them to be part of the play in order to make it more relatable and personal. At times when the actors came out on stage they would look at the audience or talk with them and ask them questions. They would also at times give them things from the play and make them feel apart of it which kept them engaged on the themes of the play. It seemed like the actors were also able to express themselves through their parts. The parts they played seemed to fit their characters which translated to the way they portrayed the themes. The way they moved and used the stage was good. For example, the character of the riches was a bit lazy and did not necessarily succumb to what Everyman asked her to do and did not hide the fact that she was unwilling to go with him on his pilgrimage. On the other hand, the actors were not very clear with their speech. Either because of the script or just their deliverance, making it hard to really understand what was going on at first. Nonetheless I thought it was funny and interesting how they switched from old to new english when interacting with the crowd.

The scenic design was mostly plain when it came to the stage, but was really interesting when it came to the screens in the background. The screens did well to support the theme as it centred on death and the different stages of it. Nonetheless, if one did not pay attention, they could miss the movement or the change in the background. For instance, it played nice in the beginning when the skeleton of death was sucking Everyman into the dream state. That part being in the beginning made one alert to what was happening in the background. At the same time, as the play carried on, the

background was forgotten at least by me and until I decided to look at it again, I realised that it was showing scenes related to the play and what was happening in particular scene. The stage on the other hand was used well by the actors and even though it was plain, it was probably the best stage for the theme of the play as it kept concentration on Everyman. The part when the grave was opened and the light reflected from below was really nice and emphasised that when death comes and your good deed outshine, there will be light in your death not darkness.

The lighting of the play was not that amazing and should have probably been more effective as the stage was very plain and singular. It did not change that much and was only really important in certain small quick parts of the play. On the other hand, there were times that it worked well and enhances the themes. For example, in the death scene when Everyman had to go in the grave, the light coming from there was an emphasis on the what the play was all about. It would have been stronger if the lighting changed the mood of the play when the different characters who were being asked to go on the pilgrimage by Everyman. Having different colours that maybe portrayed what their character entailed would have been a good way to see their differences. Also, there could have been more of a theoretical feel in the scenes when Death would speak to Everyman and when Good Deeds came on stage. Just a little of something that gave a different mood than the same white light that took part through out the play would have brightened up the plain stage even more.

As the play *Everyman* does not have a known playwright, it can and is normally interpreted and portrayed in different ways. In this play, the use old english, was confusing as they were dressed in modern clothing. The mix was a little disorienting and if one had never read the script of *Everyman*, it would be confusing as to why the costumes contradict the language. Also, the close were not very special or did they hold any importance of what the characters real were. The only character that really had a spot on costume was the riches as she wore pearls and had shopping bags. More thought could have also gone into the look and appearance of everyman. It seemed like he was a grown man the way he was portrayed and it seemed like he was meant to be wealthy in a way, but I did not see that in the actor. They were students and his clothing did not express someone who was interested in materialistic things or had money. Also, "God" should have been put in a better costume to better emphasis his role as it was unclear to me who he was in the beginning.