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*No Exit* Response

This week I went and saw the Longwood University’s Theatre Departments rendition of *No Exit*. I was asked to go in order to observe and analyze the costume design, lighting, sound, set design, and props. *No Exit* has a very small cast and was a rather small performance. There was, however, plenty of examples of the listed above for me to analyze.When I first walked into the theatre I immediately noticed the colors and patterns being projected on stage. There were mainly yellows and blues as I walked in. They were also playing music that sounded like it could be from the 40’s, when the play was set. I found my seat and prepared for the show.

I now had a chance to observe the scene design with no interruptions. On stage were two divans, one spinach green and one burgundy. There was also a gold chair, a fireplace and mantle, a statue, a chandelier, a window, and a stairway to a door. The window was very interesting because Cradeau went to open the blinds in front of the window to reveal bricks. The most important part of the set was the divans and the chair because this is where the characters would sit, talk, and interact during the majority of the play.

What I found somewhat boring were the costumes. They seemed to be fairly accurate for the setting, but I thought Inez’s was the only one that I really liked. Her costume consisted of a burgundy jacket with a broach on it, pink shirt, brown pants, and brown boots. Her hair was nicely kept back with a braid to secure it at the front. I really enjoyed the costume and thought it reflected the period well. I found Cradeau’s costume to just be very simple; a brown suit, white shirt, black or navy tie, and brown shoes. This all seemed very plain to me and could be from any time. I did find, however, that his hair, which was gelled neatly, and the fedora added clues to the time period. Estelle’s costume I found very distracting. I have never seen a hair style like hers before and her blue dress changed to green under certain lighting. There were no real costume changes, however as the play went on the characters would take off hats, coats or untuck shirts.

Now let’s talk about this lighting. There were not many lighting changes but the ones that occurred had meaning to them. Each character had moments during the play where they would seemingly be able to see back to Earth and the current time. During these moments there would be a lighting change from the normal blue, yellow and white, and become more dim and saturated. Each character had a different lighting que. For Cradeau it would change to blue, green, and yellow; for Inez it would change to red, blue, and yellow; and for Estelle it would change to yellow and blue. Also, during these moments of seeing back to Earth, a piano key could be heard, signaling the character looking back to their life.

The final two lighting changes happened towards the end of the play. The first was when the door on stage opened. During this scene, the lights on stage dimmed, the door opened, and a green light could be seen from inside the door, while some rather ominous sound effect was played. This seen was actually also significant because it was one of the only ones to use a prop. When no one went through the door, Estelle tried to use a letter opener to kill Inez. Besides this the only other props were the girls’ purses, which they looked through in an early scene, and Estelle make-up from her purse. The second happened at the very end of the play. There was a black-out on stage which gave the actors time ti get prepared for their bows and ending traditions.

*No Exit* had many lighting and sound cues that I think worked very well with the play. I believe the costumes could have been improved, but for the most part gave enough information to que me into the time period. The scene design was probably my favorite element of the play, and I especially liked how the divans looked. I think *No Exit* was a good play for Longwood University to put on and that they did a very good job because of it.