

George Woodruff

Theater 101 - 03

November 9, 2018

*No Exit*: Exit Not Needed

The set design of the play had some very beneficial elements to it, that promoted the play in a very good way, but there were also certain elements that detracted from it or were simply missing. In terms of the available space, it was very well utilized, with even an extension on the side of the stage to fit the extra long wall that was needed. The furniture was very well laid out, and did not distract from the plot of the play in any way. Within these pieces of the set however, there was nothing to distinguish that the play was set in the 1940's, with any of these furniture pieces able to be easily put in another time frame, such as the 1960's or 1970's. Specifically, the couches were clearly not modern, yet did not appear to be as old in design as the play claimed them to be.

The costumes were overall done exceptionally well, with all costumes contributing not only to the set atmosphere of the play, but also to the timeframe as well. This adaptation to the atmosphere as the play went on is best exemplified by Mary Jo Corley's character of Inez, who complained about the heat in the room several times throughout the play, and slowly removed outer layers of clothing and became less presentable and more comfortable to the heat as the play went on. Ryan Bultrowicz's character of Cradeau showed the timeframe the best out of any of the characters, walking in with an overcoat and fedora, which were both very definitively from the mid 20th century. The only costume problem that I saw during the entire play was the

Bultrowicz's tie was far too short for him, something that would not have happened to a 20th century man wearing such an outfit.

The lighting during *No Exit* was done almost perfectly in my opinion, with the lighting supporting the mood as well as conveying emotion to me. This was shown best during the characters' viewings of what was happening in the living world, when the colors of the lights would change depending on which character was seeing the living world. Outside of these views, the lighting was generally bright, but with very random shapes all over the stage and walls, which to me seemed to convey the confusion the characters were feeling. The different colors also helped me to realize when the characters were not speaking among themselves, but rather *to* themselves as they were each slowly seeing the world slip away, such as when the lighting went red as Inez saw her old room being rented out to a new couple and her connection to the living world slipping away with this renting out of her final living space.

This was a very successful production for Longwood University's theater department. All of the design elements came together very well with the plot of the play to fully immerse me into the world of the play, without the discontinuation of the suspension of disbelief. The lighting was the most successful design element, having me thinking about it and considering it even during the play, without having to go back and critique it or consider what any of it meant. What was intended for the lighting to convey, it did very well. All of the design elements helped to increase the powers of the actors, especially when put together and seen as a whole unit for the play. This production of *No Exit* not only had a very well designed and well executed set, but was overall a very good performance.