PERFORMANCE TREATMENT

Kingdom City by Sheri Wilner

Due (submitted through Compass): Friday, Feb. 19th by 11pm (CST)

The performance treatment assignment is meant to apply things we've been learning in class directly to a theatrical production created by the Department of Theatre.

QUESTIONS YOU MUST ADDRESS: We do expect formality and proper academic writing style in your answers. Any supporting outside research should be cited properly using the appropriate MLA style guide. For such a style guide you might visit the library or the Writing Center. It should be about 1-2 pages in length.

1. Would you describe the production of Kingdom City as Presentational or Representational? (See text pgs. 15-16 for definitions.) Give examples to support your conclusions.
2. Describe the central conflict of Kingdom City as you understood it from the production. (See text pg. 34 for definitions.) Give examples to support your conclusions.
3. Describe, in specific detail, the final moments of the play in terms of actual events as well as how those events related to the central conflict. Was the central conflict resolved? If so - how? If not - why do you think it was not resolved? Give specific examples to support your conclusions.
4. Please offer your thoughts as to why the University of Illinois Department of Theatre would choose to produce Kingdom City. Support your conclusions with specific examples.
5. What do you feel this production of Kingdom City communicated to the audience? Support your conclusions with specific examples.
6. What appealed to you about the production and why? (You don't have to "like" the whole production, but we do want you to focus on at least one something that appealed to you. Provide a specific example and explain why.)

HOW WILL I BE GRADED? This assignment is worth 90 points. 20 points will be assigned based on evaluation of format (spelling, grammar, punctuation, and the like). Each question will be worth 14 points. You will be evaluated by assessment of the following: Did you completely answer the questions provided? How successfully did you apply concepts from class to practices in production through your brief answers? Is it clear you attended the performance?

Note: Should it be determined that you did not attend the performance, you will forfeit the grade for this assignment. By submitting a performance treatment for a production which you did not attend you will also be subject to the course plagiarism policy- please see the syllabus for details.

EXAMPLE OF PARTIAL ANSWERS: Below are examples that we would consider to be only PARTIALLY successful. These are offered as a starting guide for your writing- for full credit you should expand the following: offer multiple observations per individual question, expand the number of your supporting examples in each question, and offer a clear and discernable conclusion based on your observations and supporting examples AGAIN- these are examples we would consider to be only partially successful.

1. I would describe this production of Baby Don’t Cry to be an example of Presentational theatre. From the beginning, the production made use of direct address and interaction with the audience. A specific example of this happens in Act II when the main character, Cindy, encourages an audience member to join her on stage for a dance-a-thon.

2. Baby Don’t Cry’s central conflict comes from the Cindy dancers finally accepting the Baby singers as artists in their own right. Symbolically that conflict represents the acceptance of all artists’ craft as having value. It might be taken further as a message of acceptance for all human endeavors. This conflict is best seen in the climactic scene of the play when the dance-off ends in a tie and the teams come together in one dance.

3. The final moments of Baby Don’t Cry were a visual feast. The unit set that had been used throughout the second act suddenly exploded into slivers of the original set. All this happened while Cindy stood center stage screaming her anthem What I Did I Would Do Again! Cindy’s song clearly resolved the central conflict of accepting the Baby singers as artists and offered her justification for the choices she would gladly make again.

4. Clearly a production of Baby Don’t Cry offered the Theatre Department a chance to train their students in the genre of musical theatre. I think the department also chose to produce this classic tale to further explore the popularity of American Idol; the musical offers a fresh perspective on celebrity and the trappings therein. For example- when Cindy loses all of her friends for a chance in the dance off the point is clearly made that with celebrity comes loss.
5. *Baby Don't Cry* seems to clearly provide a metaphor for the loss of one’s dreams. The audience is presented with an entertaining evening of song and dance but each number covers the human experience of compromise of self in the pursuit of happiness. It is difficult to imagine this play not sending the message of, “live for today but realize there are costs.”

6. Not being a big fan of musicals I thought I would dislike this production. However, the acting and dancing were so superb I found myself moved by the show. Todd Handig’s performance of the song “Why Men Don’t Dance” was a spectacular example of actors not only using their craft but also seemingly enjoying themselves in the process.