

Three Penny Opera Premieres

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In a one-time joint effort, the CITAMARD and A.C.M.O. are presenting "The Threepenny Opera" with two different weeks, April 2-5 and 5-9, for MU to view an absolutely great show. And as the beggars said, an opera even they could afford to see.

Michael Louella is in the lead role of Macheath, better known as Mack the Knife. Throughout the show the audience is led through Victorian Soho into the lives of beggars, gangsters, and whores. And yes, even a love story is included.

The show opens with a blind street singer, played excellently by Lis Cass, lamenting the fate of Mack the Knife. With a parade of characters, and a robbery, the viewer is immersed into the Soho underworld.

"The Three Penny Opera" is a three act play that is set on a two level change. The unusual features of this production is that

the set does not change, and the pit band is actually on a loft up in the rafters of the Rafters Theater.

No one is innocent in the show, not even the supposed good. Mr. J.J. Peachum and his wife lead the beggars in their begging. Daryl Swisher, with a strong voice and light foot, convinced the audience the he was greedy as well as compassionate, or as compassionate as he could get.

Ceila Peachum, J.J. Peachum's somewhat tipsy wife, is portrayed by Heidi Hirth in one of her first major roles. Bringing to life the conniving and bitter woman, Hirth held the audience with her rendition of "Ballad of Dependency."

Then there is Polly, the Peachum offspring, played by Beverly Johnson. Johnson possessed a sweet voice when it could be heard. She conveyed to the audience the image of a not-so-innocent character that she played very well.

Mack not only married Polly, but he also had married Lucy Brown, and had a weekly visit to the brothel as well.

Lucy Brown, was depicted by Terri Kline as a sassy, little wife who was not sorry to see Mack get his due.

Dianne M. Stone played Jenny, the sort-of madame of Mack's favorite brothel. She is also the woman who betrays him. Stone carried the audience through the show with a strong, vibrant interpretations of "Pirate Jenny," the duet with Mike Louella, and the "Solomon Song."

In the midst of all this intrigue comes the other innocent victim of Peachum's Beggar's outlet shop. Filch, played by Kini Anderson, begs for pity and compassion down to his boots.

There is corruption in higher places also. The Chief of Police, Tiger Brown, is not too bothered to attend Mack and Polly's wedding, nor is he adverse to letting Mack hang, or almost



Snapper photo by Janeen Nerlinger, Assoc. Editor

The not-so-innocent couple Polly Peachum (Beverly Johnson) and Mack the Knife (Michael Louella) corrupts the stage performing the Threepenny Opera. The play ran the week of March 2-5, and will run this week in Rafters Theatre located in Dutcher Hall.

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hang. Brown is portrayed by Will A. Maxey. The character was brought to life, and Maxey showed us what he is made of, especially in the hearty duet, "Army Song", which he sang with Louella.

Throughout the show, the audience was kept informed of the happenings prior to and during Queen Victoria's coronation in 1837, by a chorus of beggars. The chorus also served as scene changers.

Also worth mentioning is the Gang, especially Joel Satterfield as Readymoney Matt and Jeff Kahley as Crookfinger Jake. They added to the comedy along with John Cooper and Curtis Elledge.

"Three Penny Opera" is a well paced show with plenty of laughs about the poor, corruption and the sexual revolution.