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Evil Dead: The Musical

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Evil Dead: The Musical' Photo courtesy Some Theatre Company

ORONO Some Theater Company's production of Evil Dead: The Musical (directed by Elaine Bard) is a fun, breezy, bloody, profanity-laced tribute to 'Evil Dead,' the classic 1981 movie.

The story follows a group of college kids led by Ash (Logan Bard) as they go to a cabin in the woods to party. They soon find it harbors a great evil that is unwittingly unleashed. Soon the trees are alive and the dead start returning from the grave. It's up to Ash, his chainsaw and his shotgun to survive the night.

As with the movie, this production is covered in a thick layer of cheese. The characters are cheesy, the songs are cheesy and the jokes are especially cheesy. There isn't a lot of subtlety to the humor which is the way it should be, and at times had the audience laughing out loud. One of the best running jokes was a subversion of what happens in the movie. Ash's sister Cheryl (Erryn Bard) is the first to be possessed and is locked in the basement. In the movie she torments Ash by popping her head out and saying creepy things. In the live version, she regularly pops out to deliver some of the most ham-fisted puns you have ever heard often followed with evil cackling. Despite this happening over and over again, it was funny every time thanks to Erryn Bard playing it over the top and then some. Scott (Paul Allen) was the other comedic highlight. At first his character seemed unpleasantly abrasive, but he quickly became hilarious. Make no mistake, Scott is supposed to be a real jerk, but Allen played him in a way that it became fun to watch him and Ash freak out together.

The standout song was a duet shared by Ash and Scott. It is titled 'What!?!' and resembled a tango. Allen and Bard had great chemistry during this early song and the whole thing really brought the audience on board with the production. A song soon after entitled 'Good Old Reliable Jake' which is sung by Jake (Jake Sherburne) Annie (Logan Tripp) and Ed (Matt Walton) was also one of the highlights. When Annie and Ed question Jake's reliability he launches into a song describing exactly how useful he is (very useful, it turns out).

The production features a splatter zone up front where, which indicated the audience will be sprayed and splashed with fake blood, but it didn't quite live up to its promise. The amount of fake blood was just enough to keep me perpetually damp but not enough to pull much of a reaction out of me. Though, there was one moment in the second half where half of the zone got hosed down with ketchup bottles full of fake blood, which was nice. The biggest gripe with the splatter zone is that it was actually too close to the stage, leaving people about six inches away from whoever was singing or talking at that time. Some may like that, but it can make it difficult to see at times.

Even with the splatter zone being a little disappointing the production itself was fun and well done. It was clear at least a good chunk of the cast and crew have a love for the source material. The first half was a bit more diverse and the jokes were funnier. The second half definitely has more action though. Overall it was a fun, low budget production of a musical based on a fun, low budget movie so you couldn't ask for much more.

Evil Dead: The Musical" will have an encore performance Nov. 20-21 at the Unity College Center for the Performing Arts

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