

# Bette and Boo is a bad marriage of actors and script

By **KATIE WHITE**  
Staff Writer

There are plays in which the acting and play are suited, and there are plays in which they are not. The ArtSchool has made a boo-boo this time; there is no marriage between the acting ability and play choice in the current production of "The Marriage of Bette and Boo," by Christopher Durang. The acting is the worthy partner; the play choice is questionable.

The play uses black humor to address family relationships. Bette

(Cynthia Mitchell) and Boo (Tom Marriott) are married and proceed to have children. Unfortunately, Boo is an alcoholic and Bette's children are born dead, except for one. The child, Matt (Mark J. Miller), narrates his family's life from before his birth to 30 years after, jumping in and out of role. He analyzes the family at the same time, sometimes comparing them to main characters in classic novels, like "Return of the Native."

Christopher Durang lets the audience see the grosser side of marriage: the overbearing in-laws,

the abusive husband, the nagging wife, contested divorce and resulting neurosis. This is all supposed to be funny. Bette is always nagging Boo and having stillborn children. Boo keeps drinking and fighting with Bette. Matt is caught in the middle.

As if this isn't enough to be funny, Durang throws in a little religion. Father Donnally (Harvey Sage) is the comely, Catholic priest who consoles Bette about her family problems with a holy goblet of wine always in his hand. He invites Bette and Boo to a retreat for newly married couples where he offers advice. He tells his parish to think about getting married because if they have problems, that's tough. And don't bother him; he can't do anything about them.

Each role is clear, especially the roles of Bette's sisters, Joan (Marcia Edmundson), and Emily (Martha

Brown). In contrast to Bette, Joan is always pregnant and bitter about her children. Emily is a spinster-type who fails as a nun and has a nervous breakdown. She is constantly apologizing to everyone for things she thinks she did offensively. She spends her time writing letters to apologize before the act she knows she'll commit. Margaret Brennan (Carolyn Rashti), the mother of the three sisters, tries to make peace between everyone. Her two pieces of advice are "change the subject" and "don't go on about it."

To top off this crew of people, Durang creates an abusive husband, Karl Hudlock (George Cole), Boo's father. This man is offensive. He loves to make jokes about how stupid his wife (Lena Boyd) is, while smoking long cigars and asking for drinks. The audience gets a full look

at this character when he purposely drops his cigar ash on one of Bette's dead babies.

If all this sounds a bit base to you, that's it. Some people find baseness funny. Yet, for all the cruelty, or humor, the actors and actresses transcend this feeling. They do make it funny at times, which is commendable. One can have nothing but respect for their talent and effort.

If you're in the mood for abuse, have a perverse curiosity, or just enjoy black humor, catch the show. Durang originally wrote the play as a one-act; he should have left it so.

## Fans find The Cure

By **JAMES BURRUS**  
Staff Writer

The Cure came Friday to Meriweather Post Pavilion in Maryland to play in front of their new American fans.

Although The Cure have been around for quite a while and have many albums to their credit, they have just broken on to the American scene in the last year with their studio album, "The Head on the Door."

On their first large venue tour of the states, it was easily evident that the group's music cuts have surpassed cult status. The concert attracted a variety of people from the young punks ragged out in their usual black to the yuppie baggers dressed in their fashionable multi-colored jams.

At first it seemed the concert was only going to be for the cult fans when the band opened up their set with a couple songs from early LPs that most of the new fans did not recognize. Thus it took a while for the crowd to get moving. People on the lawn section were content to recline on the grass and listen rather than move their feet to the beat. As the set progressed, The Cure started to play the songs that gave them their large American listening audience, such as, "A Night Like This," "Kyoto Song" and "In Between Days."

The music was not the only exhilarating part of the concert. The lighting provided an interesting visual aspect to the show and complimented The Cure's music. The guys were dressed in all-black suits and accompanied by fog machines, which were constantly being asked to recreate London fog, and the light show consisting of the yellow, blue, green, and red colors that paint lead singer Robert Smith's face on the group's poster. The backstage personnel made the concert exciting visually as well as musically.

The only disturbing note of the whole concert was The Cure's apparent willingness to revel in living the American dream. Tour t-shirts sold at \$20 apiece. The best seat in the house was only \$17. \$37 for two hours of music and a souvenir is quite steep. At this rate the only people who will be able to see The Cure on their next U.S. tour will be successful yuppies. How many yuppies do you know, Robert, who wear black?

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