

'Marry Me a Little' lacks usual Sondheim flair

By JOEL KATZENSTEIN
Tar Heel Staff Writer

Those who are responsible for the production of *Marry Me A Little* at Duke University's Summer Theater have made an admirable attempt to bring Stephen Sondheim's musical to life. Unfortunately, they have met with more than a little difficulty.

Marry Me A Little traces, solely through

musical numbers a journey of love, marriage, and heartbreak. This production is a collage that is intended to show the audience how relationships form out of loneliness and dissolve out of the same.

Possibly an explanation for the hodgepodge of lyrics, music, and arrangement is the director's insert to the program.

Marry Me A Little was first conceived by

Craig Lucas and Norman Rene, with the composer's help, to be a revue of Sondheim outtakes—songs which for various reasons, were cut from Sondheim shows."

The director, who rearranged some of the numbers, seems to feel that they all somehow fit together. With all due respect to John Clum, I must disagree.

If these numbers were deleted from other Sondheim shows, there must have been a reason. The songs simply do not have the usual Sondheim flair.

Out of 19 selections, there are three songs which carry the Sondheim seal of excellence: *Two Fairy Tales*, *Can That Boy Fox Trot*, and *Pour Le Sport*.

Jennifer Nielsen Terrenoire and Steve

Watkins take the leads in this synopsis of a love life, and there is strong evidence that both of them suffered through the numbers as much as the audience.

The stage is impressively designed in silver, gray and black by Stephen Judd, and the curtain is especially noticeable in silver lame.

Charles Riccillo, associate producer of Summer Theater, served as a very congenial host to the audience, and his efforts were noticed and appreciated. Patricia Wesp is also to be commended for her fine costuming.

Marry Me A Little will be performed at 8:15 tonight, Friday, and Saturday, and Wednesday through Saturday (June 15-18) next week in Bryan University Center's Sheaffer Theater.



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