

Mater Dei's The Crucible Astonishes Audiences with Haunting Fervor!
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The Crucible illustrates a tale of deceit within the Salem Witch Trials. Through opulent lighting decisions, intricate acted performances, and a simplistic, yet effective set dressing, Mater Dei's The Crucible is a lantern that guides its audience through the bloodcurdling atrocities of 1692 Salem.

Instantaneously upon its opening scene, trees lurk on the outskirts of the stage, appearing to writhe as the women and girls of Salem sway in the crimson moonlight (Brooke Carmody, Catherine Eddy). A delicate iridescence of the moon reflects this (Lucas Cruz, Vina Pham), painting the sky with a cryptic bloodlust. In tandem, these elements effectively display the mystique of Salem, and its conjured alarm.

Betty Parris, played by Joshie Nguyen, falters in the women's dance under the moon. With shaky, projected arms, she effectively displays to the audience that there is something amiss. Her father, Reverend Parris (Maxwell Beckman), lifts the young Parris with a broad stance, though with a distorted expression in which his grief materializes. A single spotlight illuminates this pair as darkness shrouds the unconsumed, and this image appears Caravaggian – the audience is immersed in a dramatic and emotional clasp.

Abigail Williams (Lily Hirsch)'s motives towards the other women on Salem are questioned, and her costuming reflects this prospect (Abbie Kerr). Characters who shine with innocence and demure dispositions such as Mary Warren (Riley Brosnan) don flowy garments of sage green, gray-blue, and taupe. Contrasting this, Abigail William's character revolves around scarlet garments, even during scenes of vulnerability with John Proctor (Pierce Harvey). This decision successfully delivers the idea that Abigail stands differently in respect to Salem's citizens.

An original orchestral score laces the play with an ethereal, yet paranormal sensitivity (Brendan Mullholand). Melodious strings and voices reverberate in the atrium, signifying to the audience that a vampiric ambiance must be satiated. Those accused of criminalities during the witch trials are to be executed, and snares punctuate each case, delivering that security is scarce in Salem.

Though seemingly minimalistic, the set design is effective in allowing actors to present performances while remaining time accurate. Wooden furniture is glazed in sepia appearance, immersing the audience into the colonial period (Brooke Carmody, Catherine Eddy).

In an era of harsh interrogation for witchcraft and obscene criminal accusations, Mater Dei's cast and crew successfully unfold The Crucible, a haunting tale based upon the Salem Witch Trials.