

FIRST NIGHT

TAUNTON

Allen Saddler

A View From The Bridge

ARTHUR MILLER's A View from the Bridge put broken-down Brooklyn on stage in all its sweaty realism and sordid glory. The art of Miller is to become the poet of the inarticulate. His characters work within a restricted vocabulary, and express themselves with force and conviction. The one false note in the play is the use of the lawyer/philosopher, who sets up the story and comments on the action. This seems too much like Miller himself, taking his stance.

Eddie Carbone is one of the most complex and complete tragic characters of modern drama. An heroic figure, wrestling with inhibitions and riddled with guilt, Eddie wants his place, as the head of the seedy tenement flat, and the respect of his family and neighbours. And yet he is struggling with incestuous and homosexual desires that will eventually destroy him.

From the opening scenes the play moves steadily like fate's finger. The complex

motivations of Eddie have set up an inevitable end. The fact that the coming catastrophe is beyond anyone's control has the same fascination as Dreiser's An American Tragedy.

The Shakespeare Ensemble from the Massachusetts Institute has certainly taken on a task to project this level of realism with a student group. They fail to get the intensity to involve the audience completely, but by no means disgrace one of America's leading playwrights. Their total use of a strange theatre and their ensemble playing gave a good account of the play.

This (British Council) tour moves to Stamford on June 14, Boston June 16, and Cambridge June 18 and 19.

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