

Rosebud School of the Arts

THR 489 External Evaluation - Red Rover - Paul F. Muir

July 14, 2019

Anna Dagleish:

I had the pleasure of catching Anna's final project *Red Rover* on July 14th. I was also fortunate enough to see a stumble-through early in the process, so I feel fortunate to have seen it near the beginning of the process, and right at the end of process. And I must say congrats to Anna and her whole team for accomplishing an intriguing and engaging theatrical experience in a way that we often don't see in Rosebud. Well done!

Let me say right away that I must commend Anna for tackling so much in her final project. Anna not only produced and acted in *Red Rover*, but she also wrote the script, and designed the set and costumes! That is a HUGE accomplishment and far beyond the requirements of THR 489. On that front alone I hope Anna feels a tremendous amount of success and indeed, a victory. I expect she also felt times where perhaps she questioned taking on so much, and that's a good thing too! With all of this in mind I'll do my best to keep my comments to what I observed in her performance, but with so many overlaps some comments may creep into playwriting and directing, etc.

As I've mentioned, I felt overall this was a very successful final project, and so very cool! I'm a big fan of science fiction, and to pull off good science fiction in a theatrical context is a real accomplishment. I felt there was a detached, and sometimes dreamy quality to the performances in the piece, and I'm guessing that was intentional, or perhaps it was a by-product of a perceived notion of doing science fiction. I didn't mind that quality, but I longed for a more visceral human interaction between the two characters (there was no program so right now I can't remember their names®). One of the things I love about science fiction is the contrast between gut-level visceral humanity in the midst of cold space and sterile technology. So, I longed for more of that contrast. We got the sterile tech in the set design (loved it!), but I was wanting the harsh realities of what happens when two human beings are truly the last two people on Mars, and then are, in essence, abandoned. And clearly the abandonment that Anna's character experiences is far more acute than just the abandonment of Main Control down on Earth. Anna's performance felt quite controlled and a little affected at times, where I would've thought that her character would actually be in free fall and be on the edge of losing control altogether. In that controlled manner some of her text seemed memorized rather than being discovered in a real moment-to-moment discovery.