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A MOTLEY BAND OF EXTREMITIES

A pot pourri of colourful characters mixed well together at the Questors Theatre, on Wednesday, to present a mosaic of interesting entertainment in John Norman's play "**The Owl-Winged Faculty**."

A lot of intellectual bubble and squeak goes on between lecturers and students throughout the play, set in the senior common room of a new university.

Students are in rebellious mood, staging sit-ins, wearing masks resembling angry pigs, strongly refusing to budge from their "revolting" commitments. Meanwhile, a gathering of dons—most seemingly unconcerned about student activities—are preparing to wine and dine a wealthy benefactor.

During the course of this engrossing play the student sit-in escalates to alarming proportions, a professor dies, the common room is invaded.

However, in an atmosphere heavily laced with comedy, lecturers persevere in dogged fashion with their civilised rituals.

For me the lecturers made this play a perfectly rhymed battle of wits, philosophies and conflicts. They created a motley band of extreminities.

For example, the one lecturer in apparently fairly strong sympathy with students was the pregnant Miss Catherine Worth, lecturer in philosophy, played by Ruth Lister. Then there was Dr. Hugh Diss, senior lecturer in history, played by Peter Sainty, and Cyril Mill, lecturer in English, played by Brian Taylor, who tried to think everything was terribly nice and read the Times.

And the professor of classical studies, Geoffrey Dobson, who was found dead, sitting by the window with a copy of the Financial Times over his head. Yes, they really were a colourful collection.

The very basic material of the play was not terrifically strong, but was entwined with clever embroidery to make for a gripping fabric. Very witty, very entertaining.

Robin Duval directed.

R.P.