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Caligari a solid adaptation that catches viewers' eyes

By Michael R.L. Kern
Sun Star Reporter

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari was a prime example of German expressionism when it was filmed in silence and shown for theater goers almost a century ago. A story of horror, it followed the deranged exploits of the fiendish doctor and his involvement in a string of murders in the village of Holstenwall only to have a twist ending the likes of which should not be spoiled in this publication.

Theatre UAF has brought to us an adaptation of this film with the slightly wordier "Caligari: Alaska," directed by Anatoly Antohin. In this, his final show at the Salisbury Theatre, Prof. Antohin has dreamt for us a story of how fey ephemera, in the form of three mysterious sisters and a strange force sitting center stage, directs the lives of the villagers as they contend with forces they don't understand. The "theater magic" brought

to us in light and structure by designer Kade Mendelowitz seems to have realized the vision and composer Isaac Paris' soundtrack underscores the experience; a beautiful job done by all.

The slowly unfolding but visually captivating work kept the audience on the edge of their seats the whole play through. The actors, for the most part, played their roles well, although there were moments that jarred me out of the illusion when I found myself thinking, "Are the three sisters laughing or laying eggs?" The only other time was when the policemen came stomping onto the scene. I thought they would, at any moment, encounter a weak part of the stage and disappear into the trap room by route of the floor giving way. The highest point of the play was Dr. Caligari himself. The performance put on by Sergio Santana made the audience nervously jump almost as much as the characters on stage with his truly great portrayal of a villainous countenance.



All photos by Jess Hoff/Sun Star
Top: Jey Johnson, Rachel Blackwell, and Anna Gagne-Hawes perform at the Salisbury Theater in the show Caligari Alaska.

Below: Sergio Santana performs as Dr. Caligari at the Salisbury Theatre.



The cast of Caligari Alaska pose with Director Anatoly Anothin. Caligari is Antohin's last show before retiring from the UAF theatre department.

