

URBAN HERB

By Finn Harvor



Thury adaptation ambitious, intense

machines which spout unnecessary fog every time Medea hits the stage. Perhaps the worst problem, however, comes with the stage trick devised to show Medea's destruction at the end of the play. A huge canopy of white cloth is clumsily erected over the proscenium by various members of the chorus, momentarily obscuring the stage. After hasty set changes are made in the background the front row viewers are greeted with a none-too-subtle tug on the canopy as a cue to the chorus, and then watch the cloth pulled back to reveal Medea's costume and mask, lowered on wires to the ground in the middle of a silly blue spot and more of the omnipresent smoke. The effect is a perfectly ridiculous conclusion to what has by and large been a sound production. If Thury wants the advan-

tages of the intimacy he should consider some of its limitations. All this aside, this production of *Medea* still makes for interesting viewing. In the preview there were some obvious timing problems, yet the cast still seems to have a good grasp of what this production is trying to do. Vanessa Lebourdais as Medea and Melinda Little as Jason are both solid performers, though Gina Clayton, who plays Medea's murdered brother, has inexplicably adopted a Jim Henson falsetto, the end result sounding rather like a poor impression of Katherine Hepburn. In the end it is not the acting, but the costumes, the excellent use of the chorus, and the sheer ambitiousness of the production that make this *Medea* well worth attending.

fill • er (fil-er) n. an object or material used to fill a cavity or to increase the bulk of something

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