

Cyrano at Court

The Court Theatre's mission is to showcase classic drama, but, in classic Court style, it isn't getting all stuffy about it. *Cyrano* was staged this spring in collaboration with Redmoon Theater, which meant that *Cyrano de Bergerac* shared the stage with human-sized puppets and mechanical devices.

As a change of pace from the Court's usual location, the production was at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art.



But it was great to still see student-rush drama geeks waiting outside with folding chairs to run in at the last minute and squeeze into aisle space.

Although the whole puppet/mechanical concept had seemed a little gimmicky, I was won over as soon as the play started with a (literal) bang—a tree branch swung down from the ceiling with a violent crack, and knocked Cyrano (Allen Gilmore) to the floor to dream his story.



The puppet representing the Cyrano/Christian (Jay Whittaker) composite lover, with one hand played by each man, was mesmerizing.



The acting was quite wonderful, upstaging the occasionally overdone giant wooden wheels, ropes, and pulleys...

And the representation of thousands of men marching into war on the jealous whim of the noble De Guiche was thunderously effective.



It's so embarrassing when the lights come up before you've wiped your eyes.