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## Voice of the People: Bob Raymond

September 6, 2013 11:19:53 AM

'A rare and magical moment'

There was a rare and magical moment in Columbus last night with the presentation of Tennessee Williams' musical masterpiece "Autumn Song."

Imagine George Gershwin coming to town with some Broadway musicians, along with Hugh Jackman, and Michael Crawford. It was that good.

Composer George Maurer (piano), baritone Dieter Bierbrauer, and singer/actor Jared Oxborough performed Maurer's interpretive score of Rainer Maria Rilke's poems. It sounds like an awfully high-brow conglomeration but it was pure musical genius. The quality of the acting, the musicians, the singers, the directing and lighting was outstanding. Each and every song was a show-stopping hit.

The Minnesota-based ensemble was assisted by local actors David Trotter and Laura Beth Berry who were perfect complements to the professional cast.

The jazz ensemble was as good if not better than anything you could hear in New Orleans or on Broadway. The surprise solo vocal performance at the end of the show was overwhelming and outstanding.

I am so glad that the newly-restored Rent Auditorium was filled to capacity and sad for those that missed this musical treat worthy of any great stage.

Of course, much deserved credit goes to Brenda Caradine (who has been dubbed the Patron Saint of Tennessee Williams) and her festival committees and volunteers who continue to give Tennessee the recognition that he deserves, especially here in his hometown which for decades had ignored his status as America's Greatest Playwright. I think he, especially, would have enjoyed the performance last night.

Bob Raymond

Columbus

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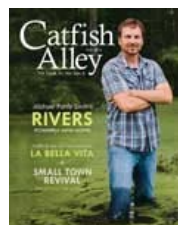
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