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Assassins



Synopsis

Evoking a fraternity of political assassins and would-be assassins across a hundred years of our history, Sondheim and Weidman daringly examine success, failure and the questionable drive for power and celebrity in American society. "Dark, demented humor, as horrifying as it is hilarious."--Michael Kuchwara, Associated Press

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Customer Reviews

All I can say about this play is that it is sheer genius. I was fortunate enough to see the Broadway revival cast act it out in Studio 54, thus can safely say that the play is just as shrewd and clever onstage as it seems in the play. The thing that often repels people from 'Assassins' is firstly its subject matter - assassins and would-be assassins of presidents of the United States - and secondly, the way it handles its subject matter. 'Assassins' neither trivializes nor glorifies its characters: what it does is examine them, and let the audience make the decision as to what prompted them to commit the crimes they did. On stage, the play is chilling - seeing "Squeaky" Fromme carve an 'M' for 'Manson' into her forehead at the end of her number with John Hinckley 'Unworthy of Your Love' does not seem disgusting; it is entrancingly horrific. And this is not even mentioning the song 'How I Saved the President', the fast-paced narrative of Giuseppe Zangara's attempt on the life of President Franklin Roosevelt: it rises to an eerie feverish pitch and ends with a jolt - literally. The singing ceases only when Zangara has been electrocuted. I realize that the above description may seem to portray 'Assassins' as a gruesome horror-trip into history - but really, that is not what it is at

all. The rises and falls of emotions in the songs (apparent in the book as well as in the play) are shrewdly placed so that the viewer can't quite bring themselves to feel sorry for the assassin, exactly, more fascinated. And this is what 'Assassins' is - a fascinating look at some of the most forbidden American taboo in our country's history. The play jumps on its subject matter with surprising gusto - it does not jump delicately from point to point.

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