

The Milwaukee Repertory theater presented a conversion of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice. The play focuses around Elizabeth Bennet, played by Lee Stark, the second oldest and second to everything of the five Bennet sisters. The oldest, Jane Bennet, played by Sarah Rutan, is eyed by every male in the room, including a Mr. Darcy. In the very beginning he has decided that no woman in the room is up to par nor should he have but Jane and he makes his point in a very blatant way. This rubs the feisty Elizabeth the wrong way in which she says, "and I could easily forgive his (Mr. Darcy's) pride, if he had not mortified mine (Jane Austen.)" Darcy does not realize his mistake until he falls head over heels for the unsuspecting Elizabeth. She is, however, repulsed by him, his foolish actions and his rude blurts.

Elizabeth spends half, maybe more of the play trying to escape the eye of the seemingly deceptive Mr. Darcy, whose true intentions seem all but positive. She was told by a Mr. Wickham that Mr. Darcy cheated him of his inheritance and this of course did not improve Elizabeth's feelings toward her dauntless suitor. She is then caught off guard at his marriage proposal in which he claims his ardent love for her despite her families financial standpoint. He is of course rejected and Elizabeth points the flaws of his character by emphasizing his arrogance, his pride and his role in the failed love of her sister Jane and Mr. Darcy's friend, Mr. Bingley.

Elizabeth is sure that her feelings for Darcy are consistent because of his existing character and continuous bad impressions. This is until she learns his true intentions. Mr. Darcy sends her a letter explaining all off his present shortcomings. He explains that he mistook the love that Jane had for Bingley and that Wickham had once fled with his younger sister to get married and gain her inheritance. Shortly after, Elizabeth receives an invitation to Pemberley, Darcy's estate, in which it is first spotted that her feelings begin to shift. Hearing of the rumors of a possible wedding between Elizabeth and Darcy, Lady Catherine De Bourgh, a quite intimidating individual, pays Elizabeth a visit. Lady Catherine would like Darcy to marry her homely daughter, Anne, in which Elizabeth would not deny nor confirm wedding arrangements, nor did she completely let the idea of a marriage with Darcy slip. Darcy visits Elizabeth-- with Mr. Bingley who takes Jane for a walk-- and she thanks him for initiating a previous wedding between her younger sister, Lydia and Mr. Wickham. Darcy once again asks her to confirm her feelings for him and that if she still feels the same, then he would leave her to be. She explains that her feelings are the complete opposite and agrees to an engagement in which at the same time, Mr. Bingley is proposing to Jane. The couples are set to wed and the play ends with a long-awaited kiss between the newly-engaged, Mr. And Mrs. Darcy.

The actors of Pride and Prejudice did a wonderful job. I was most impressed and felt each character conveyed exactly what they should. I believed Mr. William Collins, truly Brian Vaughn, was a quite interesting and [comically] creepy character, but just as his character should be. At the first impression of Grant Goodman's character, Mr. Darcy, I had feelings to that of Elizabeth. He was truly quite in love with himself and believed he deserved only the best, and there is nothing wrong with that unless you do it the Darcy way, arrogantly. Overtime, my feelings, just as Elizabeth's, changed for Mr. Darcy. He was an obvious overturned, sweet and quite an enchantingly romantic man. The love between he and Lee Stark's character, Elizabeth, was of true and beautiful intentions, just as Sarah Rutan and Gerard Neugent's characters, Jane and Charles Bingley. To be honest, the character of Lydia, Emily Vitrano, annoyed me to the fullest extent, but ironically I admire her for that because it means she's done her job and she's done it well.

The costumes and the set gave the play just the right touch. As I was told, the clothing would often convey the personalities of the characters. The Bennet sisters wore dresses which flowed from the bust down and the older sisters had a lower neck line. The often old fashioned women wore corsets and the ever devious, Lady Catherine De Bourgh, wore dark colors. The set was just beautiful. I loved the aspect that if a piece of furniture needed to be moved to adjust to the time of the play, the men doing it were dressed as the rest of the characters as if part of their job of the ball was to move the furniture. I was also quite interested when a character would read a letter and the person writing would show up in the corner with a spotlight on them to truly portray the intent of the letter in only a way the character who wrote it could. To put it simply, this was most definitely my favorite of all the plays I have witnessed. It left an impression on me after it was over and I wished I could have watched it all again as soon as it finished. I was, in all honesty, captivated and that could not be accomplished without the talents of each and every actor that added a special piece to the play. I would love to see it over and over again and all there is left to say is Bravo.

*Sincerely,*  
Theresa Shurn