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Critical Review: Trouble in Mind

Whenever you're dealing with a play that involves race relations, extra caution needs to be taken. It's hard to view things from both ends of the spectrum. It's very easy to fall into the trap of making the characters too stereotypical. With *Trouble in Mind* I think that trap was sprung a little too much. The characters all presented themselves in a composed and professional manner, but occasionally they seemed too over the top in who they were trying to be. While providing a healthy dose of comic relief Sheldon Forrester sometimes came across as too foolhardy or ignorant. It didn't always go along with who his character actually was (a professional and experienced actor). His interjections made you laugh but it was occasionally at the expense of his credibility. The actor who played Judy Sears did an excellent job as portraying herself as a naïve acting student just out of college. She came across as very homely but it fit her character and was completely in good taste. The man who played John Nevins seemed to blend in to the background. He didn't command attention from everyone in the audience. It may have been going in a different direction but from my point of view he came across as timid throughout the whole show. Willetta and Al were both commanding presences while they were on stage. The tension between them was immensely evident even when they appeared to be in good spirits. Millie was performed excellently. Whether intentional or not she really wore her heart on her sleeve which I think was able to give the audience a good idea of what her thought process was and what her feelings were throughout the play. It gave a sense of insight that would have been missed.

The cast did an excellent job of working together to make it seem like they were unable to work together. There were many little instances I noticed that just clicked with the play. It was well executed and fit with the mentality of the times without embodying too many of the stereotypes or pitfalls that a play of that nature can take on.