THE

Melbourne Review

Exploring the depths

THEATRE
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ANTIGONE
Melbourne French Theatre and
Theatre of Spheres
North Melbourne Town Hall

JEAN Anouilh's 'Antigone' explores emotional, personal and philosophical subjects to a greater degree than Euripide's plays.

Both Creon and Antigone are intractable. She follows her beliefs and heart, he follows his duty, which involves defiling the body of Antigone's brother, Polynices, and the execution of Antigone.

We know tragedy is at hand so we watch like voyeurs the complexities of the moral debate.

Anouilh's Antigone is childish, petulant and defiant, yet potent. Her rebellion threatens Creon's public profile. In this production of Antigone, which ended last weekend, Alice Garner presented a naive and feisty Antigone but could have further explored the emotional extremes. Julia Zemiro as Chorus, the commentator and facilitator of the action, gave a witty and arresting performance.

Alison Scarfe's design was a startling white on white with scattered cubes, spheres and metallic cones. The playing space was defined by a floor cloth with an abstract dove motif and bolts of muslin stretching like beams of light to the ceiling. This was echoed by Daniel Zika's dramatic lighting.

The collaboration with Theatre of Spheres allowed a more experimental production for MFT. Kirsten Von Bibra's production in the North Melbourne Town Hall used the majestic dimensions of the space by using slides and synchronised movement. A barely audible electronic soundscape by Natasha Moszenin created an atmosphere of tension and drama.

These elements at times informed the dialogue and narrative and at others were merely a distraction. The dream-like quality and the restricted playing space flattened the dynamic of the script and gave passionate interactions a restrained feeling. Anouilh's language was lyrical, imagistic and evocative.