

Death Of A Play

The Goan Institute presented its maiden theatrical production on the 25th of August at the St. Xavier's School Auditorium. Written and directed by Derek Antao, the play, **REQUIEM FOR A PROFESSOR**, had a plot which sagged so much that the seams were discernible at times.

STAGE

Lloyd D'Mello, as the ageing Professor Joe Varella, succeeded in effectively portraying a man torn between professional honesty and the truth about his first wife's daughter, Celine. The swinging air hostess Celine, who smokes only "Benson & Hedges", was played by Genevieve D'Souza, who I was told is just 11 years old! Aruna D'Souza as the second Mrs. Varella was shrill and shrewish in the first act, then switched abruptly in the later acts to a hauteur which was painfully artificial.

Some points stood out, as sore thumbs do. The scene in

the park where Varella's son, Lino (Patrick Paul) and his cronies Ivan and Paul ogle some nondescript females, was not only superfluous, it was also ruined by a plethora of four-letter words, which one felt were put in merely for the sake of effect. Of which there was none anyway.

The sound would have disgraced even a tyro. The props and costumes were bad. For instance, the Professor with his bell-bottoms and penchant for shirts from Paris, didn't 'register' as the weary, about-to-retire teacher. I feel that the dress rehearsal could have been utilised by the cast to become familiar with the twists and turns in the tarpaulin which represented the park.

Besides D'Mello, the only other character to evoke some audience response was Mrs. Varella's mother, played by Rita Fernandes. She was so infuriatingly perfect as The Christian Mother Comforting Her Daughter that everyone went off into rounds of laughter. What a way to treat a requiem

C. K.