Hatful of Rain slightly junky

A Hatful of Rain, by Michael Gazzo, directed by Marco Zanatelli. At the Nucleo Eclettico thru November 2. Call 742-7445 for information.

I never would have found the place if my companions didn't happen to live in the area. The Nucleo Eclettico, in the North End, masquerades as a converted warehouse. Inside, a collection of metal chairs faces down toward the warehouse floor. Supporting pillars would be in the way, except that the actors use them as impromptu parts of the set. When the lights went out, we watched the warehouse floor become an apartment in which a very human drama was unraveled.

Johnny Pope (Edward J. Ypickick) is a war hero who has become a dope addict. His wife Celia (Noreen Hurley) has no idea of what his problem is, and watches without understanding as he sinks deeper into trouble with some vicious pushers. His brother Polo (David Michael Bert) tries alternately to save and to forget him. The plot, characters, and conclusions are not original, but there is a certain rough realism in this story of a junkie's troubles.

Yopchick manages to convey the difficult plight of Johnny's, desperate need for a fix twice a day, and how he faces withdrawal symptoms. Bert does an excellent job as the concerned but frustrated brother. His performance is the best in the play, and his character the most interesting since it is the most diverse. Hurley, on the other hand, plays the role of the wife too straight. She delivers her lines swiftly and crisply, and gives the impression of an animated mannequin. Similarly, Leonard Corman, as the bland John Pope, Sr., is too bland. It's fine to play a part, but Corman almost put me to sleep. The antics of the gangsters ruins the film. Yopchick manages to convey the difficult plight of Johnny's, desperate need for a fix twice a day, and how he faces withdrawal symptoms. Bert does an excellent job as the concerned but frustrated brother. His performance is the best in the play, and his character the most interesting since it is the most diverse. Hurley, on the other hand, plays the role of the wife too straight. She delivers her lines swiftly and crisply, and gives the impression of an animated mannequin. Similarly, Leonard Corman, as the bland John Pope, Sr., is too bland. It's fine to play a part, but Corman almost put me to sleep. The antics of the gangsters ruins the film.

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