

Lesbian/Gay Theatre at CLOSER

Review by Nancy Snead

On April 9, members of CLOSER were treated to an evening of theatre provided by Second Stage Readers' Theatre. This was Second Stage's third appearance on CLOSER's 1990-91 calendar. The bill of fare featured Terry Baum's and Carolyn Myers' *Dos Lesbos* and Terrence McNally's *André's Mother*.

First on the bill was *Dos Lesbos*, a six segment, two-person (as in couple) lesbian dialogue with scenes that might have come from behind the walls of my house or yours. Readers' theatre avoids type-casting, but Director Jerry Crouch went so far as to have this lesbian couple portrayed by two sets of women switch-hitting their way through six specific issue-laden dilemmas.

ANita Pratto and Carol Whittemore tackled the subjects of job, parents and depression with vitality and aplomb. The numerous one-line jabs, such as the mimicky "a man and a woman, a man and a woman...if you know what I mean!", or "homosexuality: the equal opportunity oppression," kept the action fresh and quick-paced. The segment on parents was rather like a two-edged sword poised poignantly over my head.

The alternating couple, handled adeptly by Janet Oliver and Jane Snyder, paraded in grande style through a variety



Jane Snyder, Janet Oliver, Carol Whittemore and ANita Pratto

of theatrical forms in their segments addressing "coming out," men and sex. The latter (save the best for last?) vignette covered all those questions you have been afraid to ask--and even more afraid would be answered!



Dan Marshall, Pat White, Kai Schmoll and Nan Williamson

The final performance of the evening, *André's Mother*, showcased the talents of Dan Marshall, Kai Schmoll, Pat White and Nan Williamson as they captured the audience for moments of intense connection with the human condition. This minidrama, set against the personal memories of André's family members and lover, reflected the tragedy that is AIDS, doing so in a manner that re-affirmed the value of life, love and intimacy. Still seeing the release of the last white balloon, I can feel the faceless image of (Little Lulu's) mother...so remote.

Thanks to Second Stage Readers' Theatre and kudos to the cast and the director.

Ed. note: Dos Lesbos is the first play about lesbians to be produced by a non-gay theater group (Second Stage) in Asheville. ▼

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¹en-core \ 'än k(ə)r \ : an additional performance requested by an audience

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