

Stage: Last Outcry of a Sequined Soul: Star and Nun Battle in 'Whore ...

By HOWARD THOMPSON

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Star and Nun Battle in 'Whore and Bit Player'

By HOWARD THOMPSON

There have been quite a few productions of Tom Eyen's "The White Whore and the Bit Player" since it emerged at the experimental Cafe La Mama back in 1964. One viewer, who never saw it before, finds it hard to believe that any of them, including the original, surpassed the current impact of a Spanish-language troupe in a small midtown showcase.

What these people, the INTAR workshop unit, have done with and to Mr. Eyen's one-acter provides a dazzling tour-de-force of make-believe and a numbing theatrical experience. It will hook you and shake you, even if you don't understand a word of Spanish. We do not.

Too bad the Spanish-English program brochure, detailing the credits, doesn't

The Cast

THE WHITE WHORE AND THE BIT PLAYER, a play by Tom Eyen. Director, Manuel Martin; lighting and sound, Felipe Napoles-Eddy; scenery, Tom Foley; costumes, Vani Labriola. Presented by INTAR (International Arts Relations) at 508 West 53d Street. The Star Magaly Alabau The Nun Graciela Mas With Jose Rafael Arango, Edwing Avila, Antonio Candolfi, Arturo Ginas, Roberto Lopez, Pedro Lorca, Roberto Montano, Carlos Noceda and Rene Troche.

capsule the basic setup, which is the verbal duet and duel, in a sanitarium chamber of a suicidal Hollywood actress and the nun she sees as her alter ego. Even if you don't read the play (easily available), you'll get Mr. Eyen's message and more.

The play is a scorching death rattle, the last symphonic outcry of a soiled, sequined soul. The two babbling women, the pasty-faced platinum blonde and the raven-clad nun, prowl a ramp with a fan-shaped center. As they spar and exchange identities, the play is funny, frightening and hypnotic. Nudity not only works, it also helps.

This production sees the

Tom Eyen's One-Acter Is Given by INTAR

principals through a kaleidoscope, now one end, now the other. And the lighting, the visual trickery, the music and the addition of nine silent actors as sanitarium inmates all meshes vividly, underscoring the text. As the two women, Magaly Alabau and Graciela Mas are superb. And Manuel Martin's direction of the evening is simply electric. We only wish he had trimmed that Marat-Sade opening a bit and lengthened the climax.

Mr. Eyen's haunting play is the finest work yet by INTAR, even surpassing its "House of Bernarda Alba." They are performing it at the Workshop, 508 West 53d Street, on weekends through mid-June, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 P.M. and Sundays at 6:00 P.M. How they can top this one is anybody's guess.