

Warning: XSLTProcessor::transformToXml() [[xsltprocessor.transformtoxml](#)]: xmlXPathCompOpEval: function format-date not found in `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/functions.php` on line **232**

Warning: XSLTProcessor::transformToXml() [[xsltprocessor.transformtoxml](#)]: Unregistered function in `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/functions.php` on line **232**

Warning: XSLTProcessor::transformToXml() [[xsltprocessor.transformtoxml](#)]: xmlXPathCompiledEval: 1 objects left on the stack. in `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/functions.php` on line **232**

Warning: XSLTProcessor::transformToXml() [[xsltprocessor.transformtoxml](#)]: runtime error: file `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/XslIncludes/StandardReview.xslt` line 174 element value-of in `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/functions.php` on line **232**

Warning: XSLTProcessor::transformToXml() [[xsltprocessor.transformtoxml](#)]: XPath evaluation returned no result. in `/var/www/sites/htdocs/wp-content/themes/vip/pmc-variety/functions.php` on line **232**



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Regional

Sight Unseen

(Art/works Theater; 55 seats; \$25 top)

By JULIO MARTINEZ

A Level 16 Prods. presentation of a play in two acts by Donald Margulies. Directed by William Lewis.

Jonathan - Jeffery Dean Patricia - Tiffany Walker Nick - Steve Owsley Grette - Pilar Monroe

Although it received a 1992 Obie for best new American play, scripter Donald Margulies' self-conscious perusal of unfulfilled lives does not stand the test of time. As helmed and designed by William Lewis, "Sight Unseen" chatters relentlessly through the self-serving agendas of three characters: a woman's obsession over a lost love; a successful painter's raging insecurities; and a stoic archeologist's seething resentment because he cannot win his wife's love. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of a hard-working ensemble, the trio members fail to connect with one another as each plows through deeply rutted rows of emotional angst.

The concerns of these three troubled souls don't rise above their parochial immediacy. In 1991, success-challenged superstar American artist Jonathan Waxman (Jeffery Dean) visits his onetime lover and muse Patricia (Tiffany Walker) at her rural English home. She has never forgiven him for ending their relationship 17 years earlier.

Skulking around this troubled reunion is Patricia's husband Nick (Steve Owsley), who has devoted his life to uncovering the refuse of ancient cultures but is currently more interested in savaging a modern society that could elevate what he perceives to be a no-talent sycophant like Waxman.

Interwoven within this skewered menage a trois are two flashback scenes spotlighting Jonathan and Patricia's earlier relationship and two flash-forward vignettes to a London art gallery focusing on Jonathan's contentious dealings with probing German reporter Grette (Pilar Monroe).

Margulies' fractured scenic evolution, which covers 17 years in non-linear sequences, serves more a thematic interruption than enhancement.

Each scene stands alone without illuminating what has come before or setting up what comes after. Exacerbating the situation is a series of lengthy, distracting scene changes that sap the energy needed to sustain the scripter's meandering dramatic throughline.

Doing her best to provide a viable thematic arc, Walker gives a layered portrayal of Patricia as the character projects a constantly shifting amalgam of hatred, love and torment in her current confrontation with Jonathan and an aching poignancy during the flashbacks. Her failure to truly connect with either her ex-lover or her husband may be blamed on the single-minded, blinders-on portrayals of the two men.

Dean's Jonathan certainly projects a tangible sense of insecurity and disbelief that he -- middle class Jewish boy from Brooklyn -- has become an icon of the art world. But when confronted by Patricia or sneeringly insulting Nick, a wellspring of self-defensive posturing gushes forth from Jonathan that is neither conversationally interactive nor thematically enlightening.

This carries through in Jonathan's labored interview with Grette (featuring a dead-on portrayal by Monroe), highlighted by Jonathan's explosion of Jewish guilt that completely overpowers the scene's connection to the rest of the play.

Owsley's Nick appears challenged by the reality that he appears in several different scenes, and, in each vignette, he takes on a new persona, ranging from monosyllabic catatonia to aestheticism that declares nothing artistically noteworthy has been created since the Renaissance.

But, he fails to communicate Margulies' assertion that Nick's only reason for existence is Patricia's need to be his wife. Unfortunately, helmer Lewis offers little assistance.

Sets and lighting, Lewis; costumes, Laura Denton; music, Mitchells Folly; stage manager, Jesse Klenk. Opened Aug. 2007. Reviewed Aug. 4. Runs through Sept. 1. Running time: 2 HOURS, 10 MIN.

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