

WELL, THE FIRST SPEECH I WROTE AT HOME WAS FULL OF GREAT JOKES ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE CRITICAL COMMUNITY, BUT ALLAN WOULDN'T LET ME READ IT, SO I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GETTING THE MORE SERIOUS SPEECH INSTEAD.

THERE ARE ALWAYS THOSE WHO WILL POINT TO THIS DISMAL EVENT OR THAT PORTENTOUS SIGN TO DECLARE THAT THEATRE IN L.A., SAN FRANCISCO, NEW YORK, ETC...FILL IN THE BLANK... IS IN ITS DEATH THROES. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY PORTENTOUS SIGNS THIS PAST YEAR HERE IN TOWN: LATC CONTINUES TO GROW STRONGER, BUT STILL NEEDS A LOT OF MONEY FROM THE CITY TO STAY ALIVE, THE ODYSSEY MOVED TO A NEW SPACE AND PLUNGED ITSELF INTO DEBT IN THE PROCESS, THE VICTORY, STAGES, L.A. THEATRE WORKS ALL CONTINUED THEIR DISTRESSING TREND OF PRODUCING LESS AND LESS, AND THE BACK ALLEY STOPPED PRODUCING ALL TOGETHER...

aid
back alley
houses
HIATUS..

IS ON AN INDEFINITE PRODUCTION

BUT THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT INSTITUTIONS RUN THEIR LIFE COURSE, JUST AS INDIVIDUALS DO. THERE ARE AND ALWAYS WILL BE YOUNGER ARTISTS DRIVEN BY A SENSE OF MISSION TO CREATE THEATRE. TO WHAT DEGREE WE MAKE ROOM FOR THEM AND SUPPORT THEM WILL DETERMINE THE TRUE VITALITY OF THE ART FORM.

AND THE TRUTH ALSO IS, ALLAN AND I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME CREATING ~~AND~~ BACK ALLEY. ~~ALLEY~~. WE DON'T REGRET A MINUTE OF IT. BUT THE WORK WE WANTED TO DO OUTGREW A THEATRE OF THAT SIZE AND BUDGET.

NOW THAT OUR EYES HAVE GOTTEN ADJUSTED TO THE DAY LIGHT AGAIN, WE LOOK BACK ON OUR TEN YEARS OF PRODUCTION WITH GREAT PRIDE AND GRATITUDE. GRATITUDE TO THE SEVERAL COMMUNITIES THAT WE BECAME VERY CLOSE TO: THE ACTORS, DIRECTORS, PLAYWRIGHTS, DESIGNERS, TECHNICIANS, ADMINISTRATORS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE BACK ALLEY; AT OTHER THEATRES, THE MANY PEOPLE WHO GIVE MERCILESSLY OF THEMSELVES TO CONTINUE TO CREATE DESPITE THE ODDS; AND THE THEATRE-GOING AUDIENCE, WHICH DEMONSTRATED AN UNPRECEDENTED DEGREE OF SUPPORT FOR A FACILITY THE SIZE OF THE OLD BACK ALLEY.

WE WILL MISS YOU ALL, PARTICULARLY DURING THE COMING MONTH AS WE TRAVEL THROUGH AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. BUT DON'T WORRY, WE'LL SEND BACK A POSTCARD, PROBABLY SAYING: WHEN WE'VE RECHARGED THE BATTERIES WE'LL BE BACK.