

MANY MINIS

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The Writers Lab of the Back Alley Theatre, under the supervision of Oliver Hailey, has created two dozen short plays, five to ten minutes, each set at a different hour of the day or night. The result is on view in TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, divided into two evenings labeled A.M. and P.M. It is a very ambitious undertaking and a successful one. P.M. has more humor but both outings contain fine examples of writing, directing and acting. In the A.M. segment, David Link's SLEEPING TOGETHER takes a sly look at the sexual pressures in today's society. Michael Leeson's LOVE SONNET is a paean to marriage and contains a lovely performance by Doris Roberts, who also plays the quintessential stage mother in Bonnie & Paul Zindel's LEMONS IN THE MORNING. Lee Thomas' JOE'S NOT HOME is a funny attempt at neighborly seduction by Alan Oppenheimer. Joy Garret delivers a knockout performance as a woman suffering an identity crisis at FOUR IN THE MORNING by Daniel Gregory Brown. Lovely direction here by Marcia Rodd. Other performers in A.M. are John Anderson, Elizabeth Hoffman, Jim Hornbeck and Paul Keenan. The P.M. segment contains two

comic gems by Sam Bobrick. AN EASTERN FABLE deals with the classic NY-LA warfare as a wife is distressed to discover her husband is shallow and cannot conduct NY chatter any longer. Jackie Cassell as the distraught wife and Phillip Allen as the psychiatrist on the case are priceless in their line readings. Michael Lessac directed. OPENING NIGHT has playwright Sandy Kenyon putting out a contract on a critic who has always bombed his plays. Assassin Allen doesn't understand why it has to be poison in the ear. Satiric theatricality directed by Dona Cooper. Dating is looked at by Jack Matcha in AEROBICS, Marcia Rodd in CONVERSATION 2001 and Fredi Towbin in LOVE IN A PUB. Mary McCusker turns in two fine roles in Dona Cooper's RULES OF THE HOUSE and Beth Henley's mood piece, HYMN IN THE ATTIC. Rosanna Huffman is a lesbian trying to deal with her aged father in Ann Raymond's LIFELINE. Sandy Kenyon and Maxine Stuart are an old couple reminiscing in Oliver Hailey's ABOUT TIME. The variety displayed here is tremendous. From birth to death and everything in between, these writers have it covered. Every few moments you experience new characters and new situations. There is sure to be something for everyone here. TWENTY-FOUR HOURS is an enjoyable and unique experience. (The Back Alley Theatre, 15231 Burbank Blvd. in Van Nuys. Thur.-Sun. until Nov. 7. 780-2240).

