

## STAGE REVIEW

### 24 Hours (P.M.)

*Back Alley Theatre, through Nov. 7*

Oliver Hailey's concept of a program of 24 playlets, one for each hour of the day, is not only highly successful in terms of showcasing diverse styles, moods and playwrights, but highly effective as an organic event.

The program is balanced. Ann Raymond's bitter "Lifeline," in which Rosanna Huffman helplessly tries to celebrate the birthday of her old father (Val Bettin), falls between Sam Bobrick's "An Eastern Farce," which sends up New York intellectuals, and Jack Matcha's "Aerobics,"

about two couples wishful transmutations of physical exercises to sexual ones. Val Bettin beautifully expresses Michael Lewis's science fiction playlet "Sunrise on Earth." Oliver Hailey's "About Time," in which Sandy Kenyon gives a poignant performance as a man terminated after 29 years on the job, is one of the program's best, both in structure and symbolism.

Little moments of truth sliver off Marcia Rodd's crisp and scary "Conversation 2001" and Fredi Towbin's "Love in a Pub," in which Jackie Cassel skewers the power of persuasion. Phillip R. Allen gives a sensitive rendering of Rich Lenz's monologue "Mr. Broadway," although the material is unclear. Peter Van Norden provides a memorable finale as the retarded boy in Beth Henley's original and touching "Hymn in the Attic."

The set with its well-placed windows was designed by Zoe Wells. Laura Zucker and Allan Miller are producing directors.

— Laura Hitchcock