

Curtain Calls

The Colony Theatre

Papa

by John de Groot

Theatre Reviews by Eugenia Gingold

William Hindman had the script (by John de Groot), the Director (Phillip Church) and his own rare talent to construct the breathing image of the perplexing, magnetic genius, Ernest Hemingway. He did it with easy style, fascinating comprehension and skilled mastery of his acting craft.

Hindman wasn't just "playing" Hemingway. Hemingway galloped through the actor with all his brilliance, passions, foibles, sins and ironic humor. At the end of this two hour tour-de-force, one man show, the audience realized that it had been given the opportunity to experience not only the tormented prize-winning author, but an incredible interpretation by the actor.

De Groot's technique of treating the audience as a specially favored visitor in Hemingway's home, Finca Vigia in Havana, Cuba, was wonderfully successful. We were guests before whom Hemingway could unburden himself freely about his driving ambition, pursuing ghosts, unbounded drinking, innermost furies and violence and fears of the dark --- all presented with a salty, ironic banter that barely masked his pain. Dorothy Hindman's subtle music and sound effects punctuated and underlined all the changing moods.

Mr. Papa had so much to say in his lifetime, and sadly, probably so much still left unsaid.

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Death and suicide were obsessions, and Hindman's mocking laughter pushed these horrors back momentarily for the moment we saw. After all, "Hemingway is the best way I know to cauterize old wounds," he revealed.

Slightly boozy, he expounded later "The good thing about Hemingway (he had 3 sons) is they always forgive you no matter how badly you fail." Showing off impishly, he posed a challenge to himself to write a short story in six days.

He came up with "for sale: Baby shoes, never worn." Afraid of the epithet "coward", he wrote off death with "My tombstone will say 'Pardon me for not getting up.'"

Attending William Hindman's performance made it almost possible to fulfill a fantasy to visit and openly reveal himself fully to every visitor. For sustaining this every kudo, Hindman

deserves every kudo. Hindman

Written by: John de Groot; Director: Phillip Church; Stage Design-Dean Kennedy; Original score and effects-Dorothy Marks; Lighting Design-Dean Kennedy

The world premiere of *Papa* ran at the Colony Theatre, 1040 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach, for five performances ending October 11. 532-2806

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