

A Few Good Men



Troy Casey

up to the responsibility of his profession. Kathy Krantz as his colleague, however, seems like an actor in search of a character. Jeff Hilliard's prosecutor is on the right track, but needs beefing up. Greg Sheridan and Anthony Franchitto give solid turns as officers. Alex Prusmack turns in a marvelous performance as a lieutenant lost in religious fanaticism and codes of honor, duty and loyalty. Coleman, one of LA's most accomplished actors, not only dominates the action at the base at Guantanamo Bay

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Aaron Sorkin's peacetime military courtroom drama "A Few Good Men" is given a rather respectable rendering under the direction of Colin Stewart. Nearly two dozen players maneuver well around the small stage and avoid pitfalls of melodrama which lay hidden with such powerful stuff. This is not a perfect production. The cast is somewhat unbalanced—though mostly competent. The opening night offering demands tightening and a bit more time with lines, but the overall effect is compelling. Neat trick for a three hour piece.

Based on a real trial, the piece follows a hazing—a "code-red," an unofficial disciplinary action—which leaves two marines (JR Baily and Joe Woods) facing murder charges. The drama deals with the cover-up; who gave the order for the code-red. This pits an untested naval lawyer (Troy Casey) against a seasoned Gung-ho marine officer (Lamont Coleman).

Baily gives a committed performance as willing martyr to loyalty for the corps as does his skittish, more brainwashed than loyal, underling (Woods). A likable Ephraim J. Black is very credible and fully dimensional on the defense team. Casey nicely presents a lightweight bard more interested in baseball until he faces

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A Few Good Men *Continued* where the incident occurred, he dominates the stage. He brings to his role all the cunning and eccentricity of a psychopath along with the profound nobility and dedication of a man who truly feels total responsibility for protecting his men and his country. Set, props and lighting are workshop quality, but the costumes are impressive for someone who doesn't know one uniform from another. And,

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everyone's shoes are spit-shined beautifully.

Performing at the Coleman and Smith Artistic Company, 6448 Santa Monica Blvd. (theatre row) in Hollywood, continuing Fri. Mar. 12 & Sat. Mar. 13 at 8 pm, and Sun. Mar. 14, 21 & 28 at 7 pm. Please Note: double cast used. This review of cast named "Devil Dogs." Tickets \$15 with groups rate \$10, call 323/735-5126.

-Dave DePino

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