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ArtsEmerson and SITI Company's Trojan Women Review

APRIL 20, 2013 BY EMERTAINMENTMONTHLY LEAVE A COMMENT

Quinn Banford '15 / *Emertainment Monthly* Staff

Trojan Women is a dramatic play which attempts to console its audiences despite the untimely events of this past week. Troy, the city that has gone awry and is searching for any hope beyond the pointless violence, continues to fall. Are the gods at fault? Or is it humanity? *Trojan Women* tells the story of Troy's fall from the perspective of four women, a castrated male, and a loyal soldier. Their stories reflect the hardships that we Americans have had to endure, not only in the past week, but also in the tumultuous 12 years after the tragedy of 9/11.



Makela Spielman, Ellen Lauren & Katherine Crockett in "Trojan Women." PHOTO CREDIT - © 2012 Richard Termine.

The difficulty in performing for a nervous and already emotional crowd must have burdened many and probably all of the actors onstage. However, their ability to continue on and to deliver their all was a significant task which the audience was heavily appreciative of. The leading actress, Ellen Lauren, was phenomenal. At first it was difficult to gauge whether or not she was entirely present in the dramatic expectations of her role. She first felt static, treating the role as another dress rehearsal, but as the play moved forward she was that which held up the entire cast of *Trojan Women*, delivering both emotionally and physically. Her performance felt more and more natural as the show progressed. If you want to see a great performance with a great payout, she will be the one which makes your \$10 student admission well worth its expense.

One of the most interesting aspects of the play was its use of a circular rubber gravel pit in the center of the stage. This allows the audience to observe the metaphorical implications that it contains. The director used this to give the audience a visual companion to the dense dialogical plotline. Is the pit a symbol for femininity and how it is misunderstood during great times of stress? Is it a center where the characters can feel their emotions despite current events? Or is it just a rubber gravel pit? Probably not the latter, but really it is up to the viewer to judge what it means for their own perspective.

What was difficult to interpret was that which was vague and distant from the plotline. Why are they moving furniture around the stage? Why are certain characters appearing flat and almost nonexistent? Why is Helen laughing? There were difficult aspects to gauge and truly detracted from the main flow of the play.

I recommend seeing this play if you don't mind the very dense dialogue and the sometimes vague experimentation with objects onstage. However, if you want to understand the recent events that have happened in Boston, this play may provide a certain solace for you. The performances are at times astounding, and if there is a general air of relief, this show might be more enjoyable.

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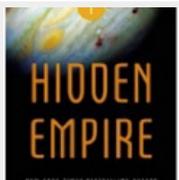


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