

Gerri Garner's Entertainment File @ _____

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“HEADLESS”

“HEADLESS”, BY THE ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE OF L.A. IS THE CALIFORNIA PREMIERE OF LEA FLODEN’S LAVISHLY TEXTURED TALE OF THE CARNIVAL, FREAK SHOW LIFE THAT TAKES PLACE IN THE DUST BOWL MID WEST AROUND 1935, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION. IT IS A BRILLIANT, COMPELLING, AND EVEN HAUNTING MYSTERY OF MISFITS WHO RESIDE OUTSIDE OF CONVENTIONAL SOCIETY, BY BONDING, AND HIDING TOGETHER, ALWAYS ON THE MOVE. CIRCUS PEOPLE, AND IN EUROPE THE GYPSIES HAVE THIS SAME UNDER BELLY SUB CULTURE.

THE DRAMATIC TURN OF EVENTS OCCUR WHEN FRANK (JON BEAVERS), JUST LEAVING HIS FATHER’S FUNERAL COMES UPON A CARNIVAL. ON THE MIDWAY HE MEETS THE HEADLESS WOMAN IN A TENT SHOW. THIS JARS PUZZLING PAST MEMORIES THAT ARE PERHAPS REPRESSED. HE RUNS OFF INTO THE NIGHT, LEAVING HIS HOME, AND THE PLACE HE SPENT ALL OF HIS LIFE IN TO FOLLOW NET (SALLI SAFFIOTI), WHO IS THE WOMAN OF THE ILLUSION ACT “THE HEADLESS WOMAN”. SAFFIOTI GIVE A POWERFUL PERFORMANCE AS THIS FLAGRANT, AND BOLD WOMAN WHO IS HEADLESS TO HIDE HERSELF FROM A MURDER SHE MAY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR. SHE HAS TWO DAUGHTERS., THE OLDER ONE (LAUREN CLINTON), TEARS TICKETS AT THE CARNIVAL. THE YOUNGER CHILD IS SIX (KAYLIN STEWART), SHE CAN SEE THINGS IN PEOPLE, AND EVENTS FAR BEYOND HER YEARS. THE KID IS NOT PERMITTED ON THE MIDWAY BECAUSE OF THIS POWER. THE KID IS CREEPY, FOR EXAMPLE SHE HAS A STILLBORN FREAK PICKLED IN A JAR THAT SHE KEEPS. SHE TELLS FRANK HIS FATE, THAT HER MOM, NET IS HIS DESTINY. BOTH NET, AND FRANK ARE BURDENED WITH MEMORIES OF MURDER, LOADED DOWN WITH GUILT.

THIS FLAWLESS PRODUCTION IS DIRECTED BY DAN BONNELL, WITH CHRIS HAWKES’ IMPRESSIVE SET CONSTRUCTION, AND UNIQUE SCENIC DESIGN BY LAURA FINE. “HEADLESS”, IS ENGROSSING WITH A BIT OF AN EDGE, DUE TO THE TOUR DE FORCE ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCES, AND THE INGENIOUS STAGING. THIS IS A MESMERIZING EVENING, AND OUR CRITIC’S PICK.

“HEADLESS”, PLAYING AT THE ELECTRIC LODGE., LOCATED AT 1415 ELECTRIC AVE. IN VENICE PLAYS THURSDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS AT 8, SUNDAYS AT 3 PM. FOR TICKETS PLEASE CALL AREA CODE (213) 368-9552 OR VISIT WWW. ENSEMBLESTUDIOTHEATRELA.ORG.