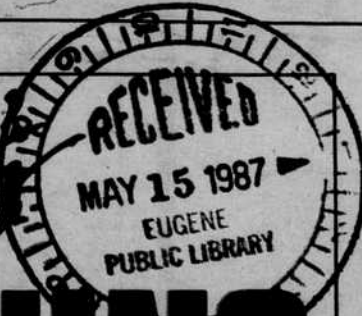


>free<

The film
Lily Tomlin
is reviewed
by Lois
Wadsworth
See page 5



What's Happening

Guide to Local Arts, Entertainment & Events

Review by
Marcey Painter Szablya

Funny, sad, angry, sensitive, hot and sexy—On The Edge created two one-act plays giving us all this and more. With impressive ensemble playing, this group proves they can produce poignant comedy and hilarious wild fantasy in scripted form as well as in improvisation.

An original script by local playwrights, *The Box*, by Cheyney Ryan with Ernesto Ravetto, opens at a frenetic pace with too many words slowing it down. The actors and script come to life when Richie, played by Ravetto, emerges from his box. In the subtle unveiling of Richie's life, Ravetto shows a multitude of depths you can touch. Feeling safe only when he's in his box on a New York sidewalk, Richie successfully avoids his life until he meets his old friend Fritz, played by Ken Hof.

Fritz, a Wall Street accountant, is also tied to a box, held by his not-ready-for-a-commitment lover. Hof's Fritz shows frustration, sadness, caring and humor, yet his character seems contrived at times. In contrast to Ravetto, whose movements are restricted but never impaired by the box, Hof is all over the stage and not as well defined. The two men, both strong actors, never overpower each other.

The lover, Pam (Catherine Guerin) and the lover's lover, Bart (Dan Bruno), become well played, extraneous and thankless parts. Director Hans Christofferson handles the uneven entrances smoothly, and when he allows the time, *The Box* is the best.

Bill Douglas directs the same players, making good use of the awkward stage. *Noon*, by Terrance MacNally, becomes delightful, sexy and funny, without being frivolous. All the actors, going full bore, bring reality to their stereotypes. Ernesto Ravetto languishes appealingly in his gay role. Dan Bruno gets to show his stuff (almost literally) as a very funny bumbling professor. I'm still laughing at Catherine Guerin's sex-starved housewife from Flushing. Renee Margolin and Ken Hof whip on stage, strutting and shouting in black leather.

Imagine all these characters arriving at a loft in NYC, on their lunch hour, looking for a quickie with Dale, who never shows his/her face, and you've got *Noon*. And in this, *On The Edge* is better than your imagination (you nasty thing). They build the play one titillating step at a time, never losing momentum until the climax, and give us time for a memorable cigarette at the end.

Last but not least, the production staff served both shows well. Betty Sherman Hemmingsen did the best anyone could with the lighting in that space. The uncredited sets that worked in *The Box* didn't in *Noon*. The costumes, designed by Kris Climer de Ravetto, were wonderful.

To see fun and frolic done with taste, thought, creativity, imagination, and a whole lot of talent, *The Box* and *Noon* are the ticket.



Photo by Alexis Hahny

Hilarity and Poignancy Mark On The Edge's New Productions