



Greek

Playwright: Stephen Berkoff

An Equity Co-op presented by Pink Ink / Vancouver Little Theatre

Director: Sandhano Schultze

Cast:

Eddy: Mike Stack

Dad and Manager of Cafe: Ian Morton

Mom, Sphinx, Waitress #2: Barbara E. Russell

Wife, Doreen, Waitress #1: Stephane Kirkland

Percussionist: David Macanulty

Choreography: Wendy Gorling

Dramaturge: Sheila Stowell

Set Designer: Susan Madsen

Lighting Designer: Del Surjik

Costume Designer: Kim Hogan

Stage Manager: Teresa Vanertuin

Assistant Stage Manager: Donna Mailey

Photographer: Stephen Mitchell

Awards:

*Jessie Richardson Award:

Outstanding Choreography, Wendy Gorling

Jessie Award Nominations:

Outstanding Production, Pink Ink Theatre

Outstanding Performance (lead), Mike Stack

Outstanding Musical Score, David Macanulty

a review from our archives...

GREEK

BY STEVEN BERKOFF

A Pink Ink/VLTA production.

At the Vancouver Little Theatre until December 8

BY COLIN THOMAS

I'm trying to build an image here in which good theatre is likened to truffles. You can pay a lot for such delicacies. You can go to an expensive restaurant and shell out for a beautifully repaired Streetcar Named Desire. Or you can go to dark, out of the way places (possibly accompanied by a pig) and stick your nose in the dirt. The latter image suits Pink Ink's wonderful, smelly, alive production of Steven Berkoff's *Greek*.

The dirt here is the whole Oedipal mess. Berkoff's *Greek* is a reworking of Sophocles' ageless story. What makes this telling such a pungent delicacy is Berkoff's language: "She has knickers as white as Christmas," or "His face hung there like a saggy, worn out testicle." This version is language-rich, but the love story is still intact.

There are many complexities here and some confusions. Eddy's moral rectitude, which is exemplified by the honest lust of his healthy cock, is also equated with material prosperity. After Eddy takes over the restaurant, he and his new wife serve "food for the soul" and the places flourishes. This seems like a curiously simplistic, free enterprise solution to Britain's economic problems. Another difficulty I had with the script was the retention of a literal sphinx. (This time she's guarding the gates of London.) The character of the sphinx just feels too archetypal in a story that in every other way strains to make its terms contemporary, even colloquial.

For the most part, though, the play and this production are as satisfying as they are dense and challenging. Mike Stack is a wonderfully honest Eddy. This actor is dealing with big passions, big sex, and big fat speeches. The fact that he does all that without for a moment losing his credibility, his intensity, or his tenderness means that this performance is a tremendous accomplishment. Barbara E. Russell, with her vocal range and physical authority, is also impressive in several roles, and Ian Morton is strong as Eddy's dad.

Sandhano Schultze directs *Greek* as though it were a beatnik opera with elements of modern dance.

Percussionist David Macanulty provides rhythmic accompaniment for many of the speeches, which become brief staccato arias. The extremely stylized movement feels entirely natural in this underground world of primal passions. Susan Madsen's set, which suggests both sewer and cave, is poetic and appropriate.

Tags:

[past](#)