

Tolucan Times - Pat Taylor

“The Violet Hour,” written by Richard Greenberg and directed by Darin Anthony.

This darkly complex and mentally challenging story takes place in a Manhattan tower publishing office. Written by Richard Greenberg, from some offbeat corner of his psyche... this is no less than a mindbender! On an impressive and cleverly cluttered set (by Joel Daavid) and abundant with appealing 1900s costumes (by Shon Le Blanc), we are drawn into the complicated issues of five characters whose lives intertwine. Directed by Darin Anthony with suspenseful skill, we take a brain-boggling trip into uncharted territory. If we could foretell the future... would we be able to change destiny? We are in the untidy office of John Pace Seavering, a young fledgling book publisher, learning the ropes of the business (a strong performance by Travis Schuldt). With enough start-up money to publish only one author's book, he must make a difficult choice. Should he go with the book “pitch,” written by his old college buddy Denis (a cocky Peter Larney) or the memoirs of his beautiful Ethiopian secret mistress, Jessie? (A classy and sassy Karole Foreman.) When John's flustered assistant Gidger (a frantic and focused Buck Zachary) receives a large and mysterious machine at the office... the plot thickens. Incessantly “ticking” and spewing endless pages of futuristic information... it is dauntingly frightening. Rosamund, Denis's rich and spoiled fiancée (Lisa Valerie Morgan) tries to sway John's book choice so that her wealthy father will permit them to marry. Effective lighting by Luke Moyer sets the tone perfectly. Beyond that summarized “storyline synopsis,” I must admit... I was lost! I just couldn't wrap my head around the play's meaning. My theatre guest, a fine actress, director and longtime stage theatre owner, was equally befuddled! Although we enjoyed the puzzling journey for the most part... we left quite confused. Sorry... maybe you will be more able to decipher the many-faceted plot. Running through March 13th at The Lillian Theatre – 6322 Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood (around the corner...). For seats, call (323) 960-1054.