

From the Aisle Seat

By Dan Wolfe

Worth the wait!

Last Wednesday evening I attended the opening of Vermont Stage Company's *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett's great hymn to the human condition ... and the production also had a plus, in that the audience for this in-the-round production receded into the background because each member was asked to don a kind of poncho that was the same color as the production. More about this further along.

The chief actors realized Beckett's intentions superbly. Stephen Hauck's Estragon proved the more imperfect character, while Andrew Sellon's Vladimir was eloquent often in his non-verbal actions, from reacting to the smell of Estragon's boots to reacting to the message that Godot is not coming today ...again. They played off one another incredibly well, and they deserved to be the center of the action and of the audience's attention.

The other three characters - John Alexander's Pozzo, Kathryn Blume's Lucky (and what a misnomer this name

is for this character) and Avery Croft's Boy - were good in their parts. Alexander always delivers an interesting character, and his Pozzo is just as self-centered when he can see as when he has gone blind. Blume's Lucky, although properly downtrodden, was too passive. When Lucky is given the command to speak, there is no realization of what we have seen of the character while he has been silent. She submits too passively. Croft brought his youth to Boy, and a fair understanding of what it means to bring disappointing messages to people. He might even have sharpened his unspoken concern a bit more than he did.

Students from several schools went to a Thursday morning performance, among whom were some students from Pine Ridge School. Here are a few excerpts from their reactions to the play and this production:

"I enjoyed the play and the jokes and plays on words that were hidden in the script (Eben Baker); The book sounds so much different than the play (Caitlin Preston); I think the play has a lot to do with seeing life one way when it is really

another way. ...The play also lets you see so many people are waiting for someone or something that may never come or may not even exist (Steph Loyer); It seems that, when I read a play, I don't feel very with it, yet when I see the play, it is great (Gabe Zaccagnini); I think Blume was a good Lucky because ... she really put her heart into it and tried (Kristin Williams); *Godot*, seemingly meaningless to some, culminates in a controversial conclusion left open to interpretation. Performed fantastically by this particular cast (Hunter Carren); I couldn't tell you what it was about. You have to find your own meaning (Briana Carroll); I thought it was exciting. The passion of my interest grew deeper and deeper into the most untouched part of my soul (John King)."

Direction by Mark Nash and work by the backstage designers was all wonder-

ful. Whoever thought up the poncho for the audience made a significant gift to theater in the round. It softened the see-through effect caused by one part of the audience to those seated directly opposite. It may turn out to be a better solution for future productions as well.

It runs again this week. It is a must-see. Info: 86 FLYNN, and hurry.