

Fascinating “Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo”

Review

By Jane Zussman
September 26, 2014



Tom Klunzinger offered a first-weekend review of **Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo** at Peppermint Creek — and now Mark and I have finally seen it and agree that, "It's a very dark, almost nihilistic work about the effects of killing (not just war) on those who survive." It invites us into the consciousness of ghosts, as they haunt the survivors. It wrings out the audience and actors and asks more questions than it answers. It is a depressing but fascinating search for

meaning and/or God, in the literal and figurative fog of war. (Great, subtle smoky effect, creepy cage/rock/topiary garden set - Daniel Huston)

All the leads are excellent, from the philosophical predator tiger (Jeff Boerger) to the manic, over-the-edge Kev (Andrew Bailiff) the troubled and twisted Tom (Michael Banghart) and the tortured Musa (Brennan Hattaway) whose strained loyalties and impossible situations evoked both sympathy and horror. Todd Heywood was outstandingly creepy as Uday Hussein and even made some frightening sense. Sumar Marie, Ricardo Medrano and Cassie Little were fine in their supporting roles as various Iraqis.

The show was much enhanced by sound (Frank Malusek, David Michael Cooper, Zuwaib Razzaq, Jeff Boerger) and costumes - with realistic accessory blood - (Chanae Houska is probably doing as much laundry as sewing — and I'm told that Ray Kurtis is the master chef of washable blood.)

Not for the faint of heart, due to violence and adult language, and general despair, it is a powerful and timely drama that director Michael Hays can be very proud of.

Continues one more weekend: 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27; 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 28

\$16/\$11 students & seniors

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