

Larry Stark's THEATER MIRROR**The Theater Arts Magazine of the Internet****QUICK-TAKES****Short notes about what YOU just saw.....****From: "will stackman" profwill@yahoo.com****Subject: Quicktake-"Ionesco, not Ionesco"****Date:Sun, Jun 22, 2003, 5:45 PM****Quicktack on IONESCO, NOT IONESCO**

Rediscover one of the seminal influences in contemporary drama in three of Ionesco's short works written around 50 years ago, early in his career as a playwright. Molasses Tank Productions revival of "Improvisation", "Salutations", and "The Painter" all take place on a somewhat pataphysical set by Duncan McCullough, performed by a company of five; Jason Beals, Lara B. Krepps, Jane Martin, John Morton, and Michael F. Walker. For this Sunday's matinee, Jeff Boardman took over the part of Ionesco in "Improvisation" while Morton played the Painter during Walker's scheduled absence. The acting is broad and energetic, though Boardman got some sympathy as the put-upon playwright and Beals, as the rich man in "The Painter", reaches a sort of epiphany. This ensemble of experienced young actors makes the shows work.

The literary conundrum behind them is all too apparent in this media-inundated age. Briefly, "Improvisation" involves a character named Ionesco being "schooled" by three critics, in a play with recursive overtones. "Salutations" is a pure word-game, and might have been more effective as a curtain warmer, but is quite amusing. The longer one-act after the interval, "The Painter", turns from how the rich swindle the artist to a surreal hijacking of art itself.

If you haven't yet discovered the Charlestown Working Theater, it's in the old Firehouse at the base of Bunker Hill St., on the other side of Sullivan Square from the stop on the Orange Line, a four block walk. Just be careful negotiating the traffic at the circle. When driving, approach Bunker Hill St. from the circle but turn left at the base of the hill and find parking along Medford St., just past the new firehouse. Go a little early; all this rain has produced a bonanza of flowers in the community garden next to the firehouse, which even has a few places to sit and commune.

seen Sun. Jun. 22**"Ionesco, not Ionesco" by Eugene Ionesco, June 13 - July 5****Molasses Tank Productions at Charlestown Working Theatre****442 Bunker Hill St, (617) 471- 5384**