

LA WEEKLY *Stage*

Wednesday, September 13, 2006 - 6:00 pm



THE NIBROC TRILOGY: SEE ROCK CITY Though the middle in a trio of plays by Arlene Hutton set between 1940 and 1954, *See Rock City* can stand by itself as a finely textured portrait of American windows of opportunity, opening and closing, as World War II winds down and the GIs return home to eastern Kentucky. Raleigh (Gary Clemmer) is a struggling writer, bounced out of the Army after 82 days because of his epilepsy — six days short to qualify for college admission and tuition under the GI Bill — and spurned in the small town for his “cowardice.” His wife, May (Staci Michelle Armao), works as a school principal, but that’s all going to end when the troops return. The couple holes up with May’s mother (Bonnie Bailey-Reed) while Raleigh’s mother (Linda Kerns) — a monument to stoic Baptist judgments, harshly rendered against her own son — visits and proffers advice. Nan McNamara’s excellent staging visually accentuates layer after layer of subtext, taking us far beneath the skin of stereotypes to a complexly woven emotional world, spun by the twin engines of character and history. See Stage feature next week. Actors Co-op at the CROSSLEY THEATRE, 1760 N. Gower St., Hlywd.; in rep with Last Train to Nibroc and Gulf View Drive, call for schedule; thru Nov. 26. (323) 462-8460. (Steven Leigh Morris)