



CurtainUp

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A CurtainUp Los Angeles Review *Sidhe*

By [Laura Hitchcock](#)

Sidhe (pronounced shee) is a supernatural Irish being and one of the things that makes Ann Noble's powerful play unique. Presented by The Road Theatre Company, it takes place in 1994 in a drab bar in Chicago and the small apartment upstairs.

Louise, the owner (Ann Noble), reluctantly rents her apartment to Conall (Patrick Rieger) and Jacquelyn (Jeanne Syquia), an Irish pair obviously on the run. Vernon (Rob Nagle), is an alcoholic cop who is a childhood friend and the widower of her late sister Amy.

Lights flicker mysteriously. Jackie is obsessed with drawing in the sketchbook she clutches. Conall goes out to find Aidan, a friend, and returns with a bullet in his stomach.

The bloody history of Ireland is as entwined as its mythology. Jackie is fixated on this story and acts it out again and again. Conall has come to the States hoping for a better life. All he knows is violence so when his friend Aidan offers him work, it's no surprise that that's where the canker knows.

The universality of violence surfaces when Louise lets her sister Amy tend bar one night, knowing a rough gang of boys will come in. Amy winds up dead and Louise blames herself. Hearing Conall's monologue about what life in Ireland did to Jackie and himself, she experiences a rare moment of tenderness and she and Conall are in each other's arms.

Bringing Conall and Jackie to the States where they carry their troubles with them and having them confront Louise, whose spite and tragedy equal their own, opens the play up into a non-Irish world. Vernon, the brother-in-law, buries himself in drink until the end when he is shocked out of it. He seems to finally see his sorrows in proportion to the others and the rest of the world.

Things inexorably spiral to a shocking, violent climax. The sub-plot in which Lou is forgiven for Amy's death ends the play.

Patrick Rieger as Conall burns with fury. His long soliloquy grips us with hopeless sorrow. As Jackie, Jeanne Syquia has a childlike quality initially that

segues into steely dominance and single-minded determination. Ann Noble, the playwright, takes on Louise, who carries tight-lipped pain until the end. Rob Nagle's Vernon churns with rage, a good foil for the others. Darin Anthony directs with a shrewd eye to detail.

Jackie's murals of the Sidhe on the walls are eery animal fantasies drawn by Nathan Mejia with threatening horror. The delightful music, composed by Robert Schmidt has Irish pipes and reeds. The tragic history of the Troubles is underscored by weaving the Sidhe into the madness, permeating the internecine warfare that scarred Ireland.

Sidhe

Playwright: Ann Noble

Director: Darin Anthony

Cast: Ann Noble (Louise), Patrick Rieger (Conall), Jeanne Syquia, Vernon (Rob Nagle).

Scenic Design: Stephen Gifford

Lighting Design: Christie Wright

Costume Design: Sherry Linnell

Sound Design: David B. Marling

Music Composer: Robert Schmidt

Prop Design: Lila Waters

Dialect Coach: Linda de Vries

Fight Coordinator: TJ Marchbank

Artist for Sidhe: Nathan Mejia

Make-Up Effects: Laci Hill

Stage Manager: Maurie Gonzalez

Running Time: Two hours, one intermission

Running Dates: January 29-March 20, 2010

Where: The Road Theater at the Lankershim Arts Center, 5108 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. Reservations: 866-811-4111. Reviewed by Laura Hitchcock on February 14.