

NEW REVIEW GO SIDHE Other-worldly shadows inhabit playwright Ann Noble's intense drama about two fugitives from Ireland and their ravaging impact on others' lives. On the run, smoldering Conall (Patrick Rieger) and his oddly passive companion Jacquelyn (Jeanne Syquia) rent a dingy room above a Chicago bar from its tight-lipped owner, Louise (Noble). Louise's steadiest customer is her alcoholic brother-in-law, Vernon (the standout Rob Nagle), who remains inconsolable over the shooting death of his philandering wife Amy, whom he'd worshiped unrequitedly. Bitter and unhappy, both Louise and Vernon are wont to tear at each other fiercely - but their problems pale next to those of Louise's tenants, whose mysterious past hints at savage violence and unspeakable secrets. Just how terrifically unimaginable the latter prove to be is something we don't learn until well into Act 2. Adding a supernaturalistic element to this already densely miasmatic plot is Jacquelyn's proclivity for experiencing strange apparitions: namely, the "Sidhe," a mythic tribe of pre-Gaelic fairies with startling powers to affect human - in this case Jacquelyn's - behavior. Full of dark turns, Noble's story is so packed with tension and conflict that at times it's hard to believe only four characters are taking part. Not every twist is credible, even given the play's supernatural standards. And sometimes the heavy Irish brogues makes essential details difficult to grasp. These qualifications notwithstanding, the production is often riveting, under Darin Anthony's direction. Lankershim Arts Center, 5108 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; thru March 20, <http://roadtheatre.org>. (866) 811-4111. (Deborah Klugman) A Road Theatre production.

