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A CurtainUp Report

2005 New York International Fringe Festival

God's Waiting Room

As *God's Waiting Room* begins, a rebellion seems to be going on in the theater, as one actor shouts to any in the audience who will listen while another almost apologizes to us, and the other two seem to be patiently waiting for the play to begin. Well, it has begun, and we theatergoers are in fact treated exactly as if we, like the play's characters, have been brought in to "God's waiting room," better known as purgatory. Here and now each who recently has left the living must examine life as it was lived, surely more carefully than was done while it was in progress. Inspired by Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, and inevitably recalling Sartre's *No Exit*, this deft hour-long rattler of both mind and spirit delivers a madcap energy of farce and a sensibility of the theater of the absurd not presented so compellingly since Beckett and Ionesco were in their heyday a half-century ago. The cast is impeccable, from Jeffrey Clarke's "who, me?" reading of the wild and dangerous Drummond to Shelley Gershoni's alluring Saskia and Rebecca Lingafelter's traditional yet frustrated housewife Indira. Totally mesmerizing is Elena Mulroney, whose wry take on outraged immigrant Bordo sardonically delivers us a fiery peasant ready to start an uprising in suburban Florida. Alexis Poledouris has directed the challenging script and its sparkling quartet with aplomb. While *God's Waiting Room* may not be your preferred stopping place just before the grave or whatever, it surely should be on your Fringe agenda. At PS122 Downstairs. 1 hour. [Bradley]