

LA WEEKLY

Thursday, August 1, 2013

GO: HURRICANE SEASON



Carissa Gipprich, Jennifer Baley and Elliot Davis in "Carry On"

Now in its 10th year, Hurricane Season is a competition of short new plays. Block Two (reviewed here) continues over this weekend, with Block Three running Aug. 9-18. The audience favorites of the festival will receive awards in an Aug. 23 ceremony, and a jury will give monetary prizes to the top three best-written plays. In *The Road to Paradise*, by Caroline Marshall, Ryan McDonough plays a terminal patient with gallows humor. His fiancée (Rachel Kanouse) -- a frequent visitor to his hospital bed -- at first cannot account for his renewed lusty vigor and impassioned speeches. Marshall's dialogue is occasionally too theatrical when it needs to be natural, but this is a sweet, half-hour one-acter. Less successful is Dean Farell Bruggeman's decidedly unfunny satire *Supermom*, about a stay-at-home mom (dreadfully acted by playwright Caroline Marshall) who slaves for her ungrateful family. She is set on her true mission of saving the world by a sassy, colorful, African-American spirit guide, "Mother Earth." This clichéd caricature is only partially rescued by the casting of Gabriel Green in drag. Harry M. Bagdasian's *Carrying On* is the best of the bunch. Its bittersweet tale of a developmentally challenged young man (Elliott Davis) anxious to break away from an oppressive, small-town home life is well plotted and nicely staged. Eclectic Company Theatre, 5312 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Valley Village; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; through Aug. 18. (818) 508-3003, eclecticcompanytheatre.org. (Pauline Adamek)