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audience reviews

From The Mississippi Delta, Celebration Arts

Review: Anyone who wonders if anything was accomplished by the Civil Rights movement should see this play. The production isn't flawless and neither is the script but it presents some memorable images of the wretchedness life offered to a girl growing up in poverty in the South and how her life changed when the Freedom Riders came to town. The actress (Woman Number Three as she is called in the program) who plays the part of the mother is very effective in the scene where the Ku Klux Klan has torched the house. She also brings vividly to life the crazy neighbor who throws bricks at people who step on her water meter and the old preacher who conducts the funeral service. "Woman Number One" engagingly recounts the tale of how she learned an unorthodox technique for blowing smoke rings in an effort to join a traveling carnival that she hoped would facilitate her escape from the ugliness of her impoverished existence. The scene concludes with the 12 year old "Phelia" recalling with pouty resignation that the fair left town without her. The play is the story of the author's determination to "make something" of herself and how the Civil Rights movement gave her the tools and the inspiration to eventually earn a doctoral degree. The story ends with her graduation. The play ends with the author's open letter to Alice Walker recounting the deeds of the women who had participated in the Civil Rights movement. There's one weekend left. Go see this play.

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