

Humanity six-pack

Certain Souls

By **Ken Javie**

WorkShop Theater Company

Equity showcase (closed)

Review by Elias Stimac

Playwright Ken Javie has searched his soul and come up with six *Certain Souls* designed to amuse, intrigue, enlighten, and ultimately move.

Structured as solo pieces, each work was performed and directed by a winning team of talented collaborators. *Acts of Redemption* was powerfully directed by Steven Petrillo (who also served as program director) and acted by Charles Turner. As a homeless man who disconcertingly entered the theatre from the back door and began to spin his tale, Turner put a sympathetic yet strong face on the faceless unfortunates in society, such as former office workers who've lost their loved ones -- and their will to live.

Matt Walker also made an unsettling entrance -- as a drunken husband spouting out a fractured confession to his wife's bedroom window in *Timberwood Drive*. Too bad he's on the wrong street. Credit Walker's comic timing and director **Manfred Bormann's** nuanced guidance for the successful balance of humor and heart instilled in Javie's monolog.

Never Smile, Never Was found **Jenny Greeman** as a pretentious princess on the Upper East Side, situated on a familiar bar stool. Her attempts to connect with a young man in the bar were brazen but bittersweet. **David Pincus** guided the piece to a touching conclusion.

Packing up her suitcase, a widow emotionally recalls the good old days in *Taking Care*.

Gerriane Raphael played the reflective woman, and **Danielle Zeghib** directed the optimistic piece, and the two worked together to set a tone of quiet nobility and grace.

The Brightest Light provided some of the brightest laughs on the bill. A newspaper designer who has just quit his job recalls a chance encounter with a woman he passes on the street. The tale is filled with alternate moments of melancholy and mirth, and grabbed viewers with its unpredictable ending. **Richard Kent Green** portrayed the down-to-earth, likable loner, and conspired with clever director **John Camera** to keep audience members guessing about the outcome of the scene.

Luck of the Draw was the last play of the night, with Javie taking a "what if?" look at a disillusioned married woman who thinks she may hold a winning lottery ticket. **Richard Kent Green** took on the directorial reins, working with actress **Nicole Taylor** to create a comically sweet but short-lived fantasy escape for the main character.

Multi-talented Richard Kent Green did a fine job with his lighting design. The uncredited song selections provided fitting musical interludes between pieces.