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## Theater review: Theatre Three's production of 'Amy's View' proves to be rewarding

11:36 PM CST on Monday, January 4, 2010

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*Amy's View* is so timely, with its talk of trash television and economic disasters, that it's hard to believe it premiered more than a dozen years ago.

Theatre Three finally brought David Hare's drama to the area on Monday in a production that starts a bit rough but keeps getting better and better.

Esme (Connie Coit), a star of the London stage, extravagantly takes taxis home to her house in the country. Her late husband's mother, Evelyn (Terry McCracken), more or less keeps the place going. One evening Esme comes home to find that her grown daughter, Amy (Danielle Pickard), has brought home a young man the mother finds unsuitable. Dominic (Kevin Moore), though ambitious to make films, currently waylays unsuspecting celebrities for a tabloid. Soon he's producing a popular TV series that takes potshots at what he considers Britain's cultural pretensions – and the theater is one of the artistic forms he finds most outdated.

Though for awhile *Amy's View* seems a theatrical debate about theater, it eventually explores many aspects of contemporary society. Money comes into question because Esme's agent, Frank (Sonny Franks), manages her investments as well. Hare's work, with its frankly political slant, is always in danger of turning polemical. But he's careful to give the characters who seem like the villains the best arguments, so as to even things out.

The Theatre Three actors, directed by Jac Alder, begin the opening scene in too emphatic a tone, their accents sometimes unpersuasive. Part of Dominic's charm is supposed to be sheer sex appeal, but a ridiculous wig just makes Moore look silly. Things settle down soon enough. Coit's native sense of ironic humor doesn't really fit Esme's self-dramatizing highhandedness. But she has star quality and the requisite intelligence.

Pickard's performance proves that if you give a talented young actor a series of big challenges, she will grow into them. A constant presence on Dallas stages over the last few seasons in roles as great as Eliza Doolittle and Desdemona, she now demonstrates complete mastery in what is, after all, the title role of *Amy's View*. Esme says in the play that acting is saying one thing while the audience sees you thinking another. That's just what Pickard – and Coit, for that matter – do.

Through Jan. 31 at Theatre Three in the Quadrangle, 2800 Routh St. Runs 150 mins. \$10 to \$40. 214-871-3300, [www.theatre3dallas.com](http://www.theatre3dallas.com).