

# A very convincing liar

## Here Lies Henry

Neptune Theatre Studio Series  
Sir James Dunn Auditorium

Henry Tom Gallery is here to tell us something we don't already know. Neptune Theatre opens this season's studio series with *Here Lies Henry*, a play that embraces life and death, love and lies, and all the little things that make up our existence as human beings.

*Here Lies Henry* is a production of the critically acclaimed Da Da Kamera theatre group from Toronto. Created by actor/director Daniel MacIvor and Daniel Brooks, this one man play is a masterpiece in minimalism. One man, some lights, and some sounds combine to give an atmosphere of intimacy, breaking down the fourth wall and making the audience feel like they are part of the drama. The only props were a chair and a cigarette which the character had to wheedle out of the largely nonsmoking audience. Seeing Henry begging for a smoke from the crowd added to the interactive aura of the evening.

Henry, as the title states in a double entendre sort of way, is a liar. He is also an optimist, the former being a necessary component of the latter. This is the first thing we learn from Henry's discourse as he goes on to tell the story of his life and what he has learned from it. He does so in such a way as befits a liar: constantly doubling back in the narrative, picking up seemingly meaningless information dropped earlier, and

running with it to a startling resolution. Watching this play was like watching a puzzle being put together. Part of the magic is not knowing what the puzzle will look like until it is finished, and when you see the final piece dropped into place, all you can say is "Wow!"

Daniel MacIvor slips into this character like a glove, not surprising since he co-created Henry. From Henry's first faltering attempts to win the audience, to his eventual domination of the spotlight, MacIvor gave the impression that he was not just playing a part, but was the part. When Henry says that "Even my name is a lie", we are reminded that in essence, all an actor is a professional liar. MacIvor is a very convincing liar.

Adding to the atmosphere were the lights and sounds of the production. The sounds and music were composed by Richard Feren and seemed in constant conflict with Henry, adding to his liar's title. The lights by Jan Komarek took the place of props on the bare stage. Henry speaks from a shrinking spotlight in the centre of the stage until all we can see is his head as he delivers his revelatory final speech.

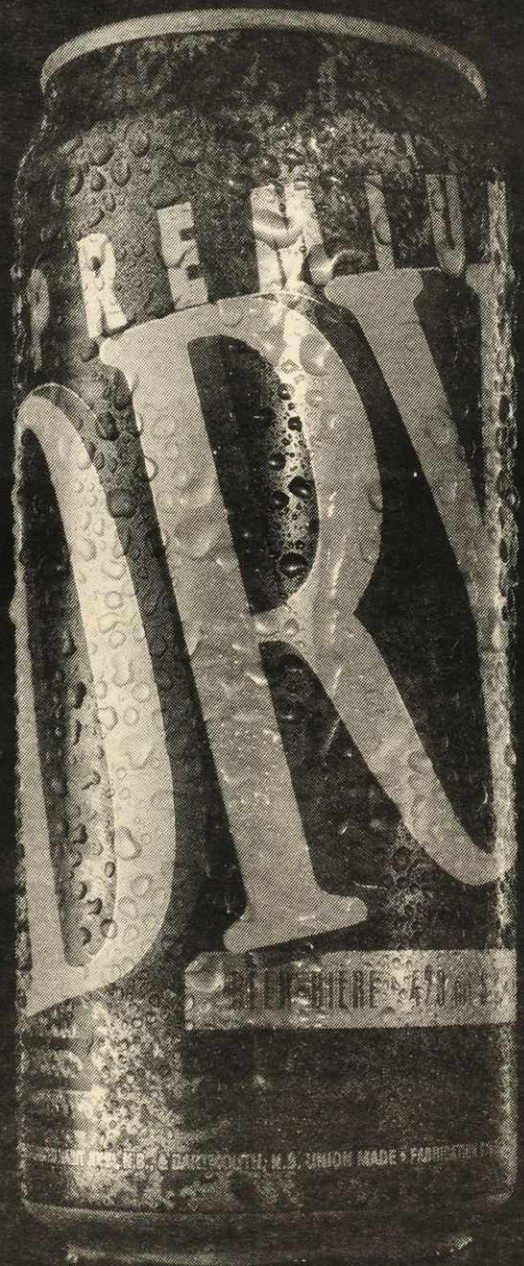
What did Henry tell me that I didn't already know? As with everything, what you get out of it depends on what you take in with you. All the elements combined to provide a thought provoking work of art.

NEIL FRASER



*Here lies Henry continues at the Sir James Dunn Auditorium until October 13.*

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