



Today's critics' picks

Search

- Home
- Art
- Books
- Clubs
- Comedy
- Dance
- Film
- Games
- Gay
- I, New York
- Kids
- Museums
- Music
- Opera & Classical
- Own This City
- Real Estate
- Restaurants & Bars
- Sex & Dating
- Shopping
- Spas & Sport
- Theater
- Travel
- TV & DVD
- Video

Tools

- E-mail
- Print
- Rate & comment
- Report an error
- Share this

Theater

Time Out New York / Issue 685 : Nov 13-19, 2008

Theater review

Bury the Dead

Critic's Rating

Connelly Theatre. By Irwin Shaw. Dir. Joe Calarco. With ensemble cast. 1hr 40mins. No intermission.

Blogs

The TONY Blog

mtvU Woodie Awards

Published at 3:50pm

I've got a bone to pick with MTV. When I was growing up in the 1990s, the channel used to actually—try hard to remember—play music videos and, believe it or not, introduce...

[More posts »](#)

When the Group Theatre premiered it on Broadway in 1936, Irwin Shaw's *Bury the Dead* must have already seemed timeless. Set amid a generic foreign conflict, the play presents, in bracingly plainspoken terms, an iconic conceit—six dead American GIs stand up in protest and refuse to be buried—and mines it more for human drama than political significance.

Although it is bluntly antiwar, the most compelling moments of *Bury the Dead* plumb existential dilemmas (class, mortality, social responsibility) that transcend life during wartime.



FIGHTING WORD'S Mandell Butler, Champlin and Fred Berman, from left, share soldiers' stories. Photograph: Carroll Rosegg

Transport Group's valiant new revival frames the piece within a town hall meeting led by a cheery Middle American music teacher (Donna Lynne Champlin, laying it on a little thick). Piqued by news of Iraq War casualties, she proposes a reading of Shaw's play and recruits an all-male cast from actors planted among the audience. Before long, these performers have taken over the stage and transformed into the disgruntled grunts themselves. Champlin looks on, alternately rapt and aghast; later, she heroically plays the female relatives and romantic partners of each soldier in turn.

Joe Calarco's excellent ensemble and designers masterfully blur and scramble the material; imagine the stark-staring WWI doughboys from the curtain call of *Journey's End* wandering through *Our Town*. That may not make for an edge-of-your-seat bulletin from the front. But at its best, *Bury the Dead* emerges as a social-realist stage poem on the tests that every generation faces, in war or in peace.

— Rob Weinert-Kendt

Comments | [Leave a comment](#)
No comments yet. [Click here and be the first!](#)

Theater

Les Mouches, Part I: Patti LuPone makes a Splash

Published on 11/10/08

The name *Splash* doesn't do justice to the tidal wave of love that greeted Patti LuPone last week when she made a "surprise" guest appearance at the Chelsea gay...

[More posts »](#)

Video

Theater video blog

Theater video blog

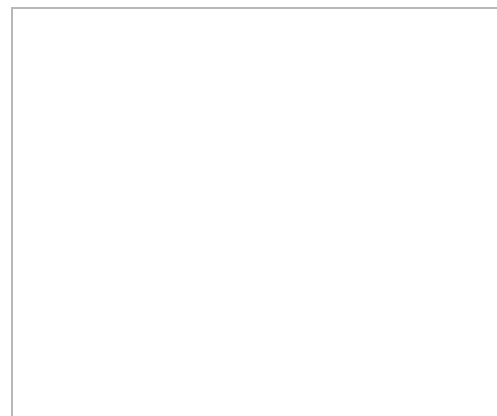
Our critics fill you in on the latest Theater news.

[Watch now »](#)

Survey

Tell us...

We're considering adding social networking and other



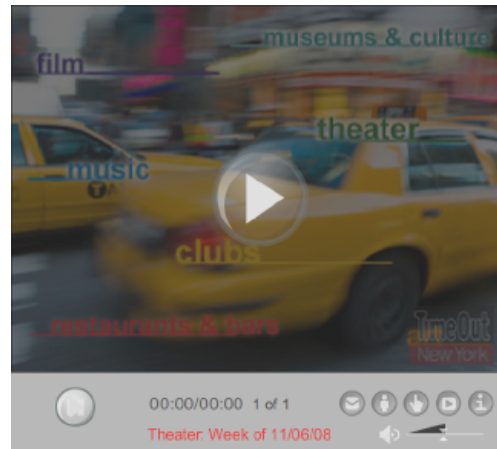
Most viewed in Theater

Articles Venues

1. Romeo and Juliet
2. Cry-Baby
3. A class menagerie
4. Seussical
5. Grease
6. The comeback kid
7. This is Essential: Theater
8. The Little Mermaid
9. August: Osage County
10. Gypsy

Video

This week in Theater



[Watch more videos »](#)

interactive features (profile pages, calendaring, etc.) to our site. Tell us which ones you'd like to see.

[Take the survey »](#)

Video

Tons of clips!

Get a heads-up on the week's biggest happenings, go inside the hottest restaurants and trendiest shops, and more.

[Watch videos »](#)

TONY Student Guide

Essential advice for our scholastically minded citizens.

Continuing Education

Never stop learning. There's no excuse not to go back to school.

Visitor info

Everything you need to know to get the most out of New York City.

TONY Free Flix

Get free tickets to hot new movie releases.

Discount theater tickets

18-35? Join Hiptix and TONY for \$20 tickets to all Roundabout Theatre

Company shows.

Prizes & Promotions

Win prizes and get discounts, event invites and more.

The *TONY* Lounge

Stop by for a drink at our bar within New World Stages in midtown Manhattan.

TONY on the radio

Tune in to *Out There with TONY* on WPS1.org for conversations with our editors and special guests.

TONY Nightlife+

Get real-time information for bars, clubs and restaurants on your mobile.

Newsletter

The best in NYC theater, delivered to your inbox every week. Sign up now.

Subscribe

- [Subscribe now](#)
- [Give a gift](#)
- [Subscriber services](#)