



THE TROJAN WOMEN When confronted with the tragedies of the ancient Greeks, is it the DNA of the actors or the “seriousness” of the text that often draws out overwrought performances? This production of Kenneth Cavender’s translation of Euripides’ 415 B.C. anti-war classic is stymied by melodramatic turns worthy of a Telemundo *telenovela*. Of course,

the touchstone of this version is our current debacle in Iraq, with the Greek soldiers sporting U.S. military camouflage and wreaking havoc on Troy and its army, and sexually claiming the multitude of now-widowed and -keening Trojan women. We are treated to Kelvin Han Yee’s hilarious channeling of George W. Bush in his interpretation of Menelaus, replete with Dubya’s standard-issue hand gestures and malapropisms. Another highlight is Patricia Ayame Thomson’s air-head Helen attempting to portray herself to her husband, Menelaus, as a victim, despite the bloodletting that her lust for the Trojan prince Paris has caused. However, under Alberto Isaac’s one-note direction, other cast members, such as Emily Kuroda as Hecuba, whose character is understandably bereft after her husband King Priam’s slaying, eschew any nuance and proffer deliveries that are more histrionic than heroic. Lodestone Theatre Ensemble at GTC BURBANK, 1111-B W. Olive Ave., Burbank; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; thru Aug. 26. (323) 993-7245. (Martín Hernández)