

## EULOGY REVIEWS

Los Angeles Times

### **L.A. Times: Mourning and dissecting Daddy**

*An amiable mixture of sass and sympathy attends "The Eulogy" at Beverly Hills Playhouse. As a not-so-grieving daughter who goes from rant to catharsis at her father's funeral, actress-writer Brynn Thayer delivers the goods as far as her solo premise permits.*

*The situation is basic. We are at the service for a deceased former Navy commander and Cabinet member whose flag-draped coffin rests at center stage. Thayer arrives at the lectern, svelte, enervated and ready to eulogize Dad.*

*Actually, she dissects him, in a circuitous, violets-and-vitriol fashion. Such as when Thayer calls out Candy, her father's trophy-girl mistress, while pointing out Mom down front. Or her entreaty of an attendee to place a cellphone call to Bobby Don, the absent family friend whose perceived betrayal led to SEC criminal charges and imprisonment.*

*Of course, it's as much about the mourner as the departed, and Thayer draws on an impressive vocal range and seriocomic timing as she jockeys between confidential intimacy and arm's-length restraint. Biographical references, such as Thayer's soap opera career -- "I was playing an ex-nun, whose husbands kept dying mysteriously" -- give her monologue a tantalizing bite of veracity. However, "The Eulogy" is at its most interesting when Thayer's bone-dry quips halt, her eyes fixed far beyond us, and the palpable warring emotions silence the room.*

*First-time director Michael Learned keeps this sardonic showcase spare, funny and accessible. It could stand some rethinking on wisecracks and a bit more soul-baring specificity at the climax, which does not yet carry the textual stakes to mirror Thayer's histrionic reach. Still, "The Eulogy" presents a singular talent in peak form, and playgoers with paternal issues will likely relate.*

*David C. Nichols*

*"The Eulogy," Beverly Hills Playhouse, 254 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills. 8p.m. Saturdays. Ends April 5. \$15. (310) 358-9936. Running time: 55 minutes.*