

**From:** Lucy Pollak <lucy@lucypr.com>  
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**To:** John Montana <johnmontana@sbcglobal.net>  
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January 19-25. 2007

**GD SAFETY** Playwright Chris Thorpe's timely drama probes the conundrum of a photographer of war grown inured to its atrocities. After years of bearing witness to killing and mutilation, Michael (John Montana) has become alienated not only from his family but from himself. He inhabits an existential netherworld in which he struggles to vanquish a persistent whisper of self-loathing; this grows more distinct after a stranger (Mac Brandt) saves his daughter from drowning while Michael stands by, a frozen witness. Concerned with moral choices, the play offers profound insight into human contradiction. On opening night, this production, directed by Peter Forster, featured a capable ensemble whose members were still exploring their roles. Brandt playing a man who never reads the newspaper but who can act in a crisis is highly effective as Michael's foil. But both Peggy Goss as Michael's resentful wife, and Katrina Lenk as his trendy journalist mistress, need to delve deeper to be fully persuasive. Montana, convincing as a troubled introspective individual, could also use more color and passion; likewise, while Russ Borski's production design may reflect the gray despair that dominates Michael's inner life, its shadowy sameness doesn't always serve the drama. Reservations notwithstanding, this is a fine work of theater. MCCADDEN PLACE THEATRE, 1157 N. McCadden Pl., Hlywd.; perfs Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; thru Feb. 18. (818) 780-0661. (Deborah Klugman)

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