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## **CAMERA VS. GUNS**

The recent opening of 'Safety' at the Closet Space Theatre in Hollywood honed into a subject which, oddly enough, has received little attention over the years of photojournalism. It raises the question: when a cameraman is photographing a conflict in some part of the world and he has to photograph an act of violence, as part of his profession, at what point does his own compassion for what is happening come into play? Does he attempt to come to the aid of the victim, therefore ignoring his own professional calling, or not?

This seamless production directed by Peter Forster from the play by the British playwright Chris Thorpe certainly covers all the bases and truly projects the dilemma facing the protagonist Michael, acutely played by John Montana, with all the nuances intact. He's in the hot seat facing not only his ever suffering wife, a visiting journalist interviewing him, a recently arrived dinner guest who had previously saved Michael's daughter from drowning but also his own inner doubts and conflicts as to how he should react to what is expected of him at a moment of possible death and carnage. Should he reach for his camera or for a gun?

All the players in this drama are up to par and give their respective parts the intensity the drama deserves. Peggy Goss, taking the role of his wife, lets him know that she is tired of his long absences from home and his lack of attention to their child. The journalist, played by Katrina Lenk, is determined to extract the truth from Michael as to his true feelings about the conundrum he has got himself into. Mac Brandt gives his all as the dinner guest who finds himself alienated by the psyche of Michael, and vividly expresses his displeasure.

How all this resolved I will leave to the minds of whoever is lucky enough to be a part of this production and I will guarantee no one will feel any need to walk out at any time for any reason until the denouement comes, affecting everyone involved.

I also give amply deserved kudos to the sparse but very effective set design by Russ Borski and to the vividly displayed sound design by Michael Cooper.

- BOB ROBERTS