

FINE ACTING IN SEÑOR DE LAS LUCES

Perucho Villagra is playing what must surely be one of the most difficult of theatre roles in the production of *El señor de las luces*, performing at La Esquina.

For two hours of uninterrupted concentration he never leaves his demanding character for a second. Playing a hospital patient slumped in a coma and wheeled around in a chair like a vegetable on a trolley, Villagra maintains the same cripplingly uncomfortable position, his eyes half closed, his head sunk to one side, without a wink. At the curtain call he blinked and swayed, his body still twisted into a question mark. Perucho's father Nelson wrote, directed and starred in the play, but this casting is surely the most unrewarding form of nepotism imaginable.

Nelson plays another inmate, an old man with what may be religious delusions, whose persistent dreaming of the force of his mind contrasts ironically with his incarceration



dignity to his persecution by a sadistic male nurse (played with ineffectual menace by the very good Lucio Cepa) and redeems the at times melodramatic script. All of the characters, except Perucho, are trapped in situations from which they dream of escaping: Adrian, the male nurse, fantasizes about power he will never have; Olvido, another nurse, dreams of romance and marriage and keeps a bridal bouquet hidden in a suitcase. But Villagra, profesor Le Savant, has the finest dreams, and is tormented the most, yet he never abandons them. Perucho's comatose figure slumped permanently in the corner is the constant reminder of the ultimate imprisonment, the threat of the physical world's last laugh, death, which provides the heroic background to

Le Savant's continuing resistance to give up his dreams of light and heaven in this sad and excellently acted play. N.Review

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Avenida Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins 651, Santiago, Región Metropolitana, Chile