

his siblings about what they could buy with their inheritance money, which lightens the mood considerably. Lavinia (Amelia White) finds this frivolity shameful, at least until she's had a few drinks and finally admits the truth about their deceased father.

Cullum and Bermingham are a sheer delight in "Peppers," both in their corny comedy act and their hilariously bitter infighting. Cullum is also amusing as the sardonic brother Richard in "Album," and Bermingham is just right as the oblivious Dolly in "Life." Wernette and Paton are excellent foils in "Oak," each trying to outdo the other in self-righteousness, and Eiden is gawkily great as the petulant Elsie, screeching and stomping and sobbing to get her way. Clark is very funny as the giddy Henry, slapping his mother-in-law and relishing his escape, and he's equally fine as railway station employee Albert in "Life."

Holt is a marvel, fragile and nervously brave in "Life" yet darkly comical in "Album," in a pair of perfs that ably demonstrate her impressive range and talent. Willis is excellent as the smitten Alec, and a silent scene of Laura and Alec gazing at each other, sheer longing in the air between them, shows that words are not always necessary for great acting. Anne Gee Byrd is crankily amusing as cafe manager Myrtle, and White is very fine as Lavinia, each perf both funny and surprisingly touching. Finally, Pine brings a seemingly effortless charm to his role as Jasper, and Philip Proctor is quite good as the loyal if mostly deaf servant Burrows.

Directors Stefan Novinski ("Peppers"), Robert Goldsby ("Oak") and Brendon Fox ("Album") do terrific work with their comedies, with perfect pacing and lively staging. Shroyer, however, outdoes herself with "Life," getting subtle, layered performances from her cast, deftly balancing comedy and drama, using sound and lighting expertly -- the loud train sound effect begins to seem like the onrush of doom -- and ends up with perhaps the best of all of the one-acts in this production. Mention should be made of John Iacovelli's sets and A. Jeffrey Schoenberg's costumes, both of which continue to add color and depth to each part of this admirable show.

Sets, John Iacovelli; costumes, A. Jeffrey Schoenberg; lighting, Jose Lopez; sound, John Zalewski; musical director, Matt Goldsby; production stage manager, Young Ji. Opened, reviewed Nov. 10, 2007; runs through Dec. 23. Running time: 3 HOURS.