

Harry Groener, three-time Tony nominee for *Oklahoma!*, *Cats*, and *Crazy for You*; and Antaeus' stalwart artistic director Jeanie Hackett, one of our town's most engaging and fiercely committed actors, alternating with Gigi Bermingham, who almost was my secret love in Murray Mednick's *Fedunn* at the Odyssey in 2003 before she had the sense to move on to greener climes. Although I only saw half of the company's fine performers the night I attended, my plan is to return at least once or even twice until I've seen as many of these miraculous actors as humanly possible interpret Ünel's multi-faceted roles. They—and this sweepingly grand and unbelievably ambitious three-act play—are that good.



Minor druthers: Sure, *Pera Palas* is occasionally hard to follow but, like opera, there's a handy-dandy character guide in the program that will help you realize that, for instance, one character played by the tall and lanky Brochtrup in 1918 is the same character assayed by the pint-sized Dawn Didawick, who resembles a live-action version of Disney's Bippity, Boppity and Boo, in the 1952 storyline. Although I usually embrace such boldly imaginative cross-gendered casting choices, which not only works for Charles Busch and Justin Tanner but can even energize such serious drama as Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, here it