THERESE, an elderly New York wife, Nina, who have lived an exotic life in Europe. Constance's contemporary, Rose Griggs, is a giggle gal who refuses to believe that she isn't 25 anymore or that her military-man husband is determined to leave her. Also on hand is matriarch Mary Ellis, who recognizes the conflicted sexuality in her grandson Frederick that the boy's mother, Carrie, is blind to.

Antaeus' two casts—labeled "Dreamers" and "Idealists"—each wiring subtly different qualities from the play. Except for Shannon Holt's wonderful, coltish Constance, the Dreamers have a greater air of resignation from the start; we know these people aren't going to rebound. The Idealists, on the other hand—with Faye Grant's spunky Rose and Stephen Caffrey's gauging Nick—seem to be fighting harder to find the joy in their fading lives.

Hellman's Chekhovian structure allows the well-stocked Antaeus bench to sink their teeth into a dozen delicious characters. Aside from those already mentioned, some of the standout include Kurtwood Smith in an artfully underplayed turn as Gen. Griggs, Jeffrey Nordling as a restless and still debonair Nick, and Jane Kaczmarek, whose Nina brings an impish livelihood to the title character and Abby Ford is cutely deftly as Mary, while Dawn Diddawick brings more matronly wisdom to the part.

Enough cannot be said about Tom Buderwitz's gorgeous set, which establishes the necessary playing spaces with depth and levels, defying the restrictions of the intimate Deaf West space. All of the production elements are top-notch, in fact, with the exception of the jarring music in between scenes, which seems disconnected from the wistful goings-on that are so sensitively brought to life by Biederman and his capable casts.

—Christopher Cappiello

Peter Pan

The magic of JM Barrie's Peter Pan is brought to vivid life in ThreeSixty Theatre's travelling production of the classic fairy tale. With a cast and crew of a hundred and a 360-degree movie screen the size of three IMAX screens, Peter Pan is a visual treat made all the more enchanting by a perfect cast and ingenious sets and costumes.

The tale hasn't changed: A boy who won't grow up climbs through the bedroom window of three English children, and before long they have all taken flight to the island of Neverland. There they meet Peter's crew of orphans called the Lost Boys, a tribe of Indians, peculiar mermaids and a band of pirates led by the amusingly brash Captain Hook.

Adapted by Tanya Ronder from JM Barrie's original play, Peter Pan is a theatrical experience from start to finish. Performed in a tent constructed specifically for the show, the "theater" holds 1,500 audience members who circle almost the entire stage. The characters leave and enter the scene in ingenius ways and a massive movie screen encircles the tent serving as the ever-changing backdrop to the show. Whether we are standing on the deck of a pirate ship, or deep under the surface of Neverland's waters, the images effectively plop us right down in the middle of the action. Adding to these visuals is Benjamin Wallfisch's beautiful score, which punctuates the wonder of it all with dazzling clarity.

Veteran stage and film actor, Jonathan Hyde (Titanic, Jumonji) plays the dual role of Mr. Darling and Captain Hook. As Mr. Darling he is a puffed-up stick-in-the-mud whose only care is of work and how best to organize his and the children's lives. As Captain Hook, he is a maniacal buffoon who wants to destroy not just the Lost Boys, but Peter Pan himself. Long standing as the best analogy of a man who has forgotten how to be a child, the part is a tour de force of acting and Hyde doesn't disappoint. As Peter, newcomer Nate Follows brings an impish livelihood to the title character and Abby Ford is cutely deft as the self-assured Wendy. Itxaso Moreno as the irritated fairy Tinkerbell is hilariously weird, emiting raspy grunts and growls at anyone who gets in the way of her friendship with Peter. Puppeter Christopher Keller skilfully plays the animal characters (sheepdog Nana and the cleverly constructed crocodile among them), seamlessly adding them to the action of the show. But it is the flying that will have audiences oohing and ahhing. When the Darling children join Peter Pan on their first flight, the four zoom over London, skimming rooftops and zipping through the arches of the city. It's a delicious bit of staging that truly makes us believe in the magic of fairy tales—and theater.

—Kevin P. Taft