



PHOTO BY DAWID JAWORSKI  
*Lascivious Something* at [Inside] the Ford

**GO LASCIVIOUS SOMETHING** "Things often burst," intones a radio newscaster in the premiere of playwright Sheila Callaghan's simmering symbolist melodrama. That line could refer to the dream of a more equitable, progressive society that exploded with the 1980 presidential election of Ronald Reagan, the play's historical backdrop. It could represent one of the bottles of new wine in the cellars of former activist-turned-winemaker August (Silas Weir Mitchell). Or it could hint at the decadent, Dionysian fantasy August is living out with his sensual young Greek wife, Daphne (the fine Olivia Henry), on their isolated Mediterranean-island retreat. That his solipsistic existence is built on

the somewhat shaky foundation of a carefully buried past is suggested both by the cache of discarded wine bottles revealed just beneath the surface of designer Sibyl Wickersheimer's cutaway hilltop set and in the ease with which August's fragile complacency is shattered by the appearance of ex-compatriot/true love Liza (a feverish Alina Phelan), who is intent on rekindling their former passion. Callaghan, whose previous work might be described as post-feminist punk incursions into the poetic turf of early Sam Shepard, here employs a more linear narrative line to push her personal-is-political agenda. Mitchell delivers a forceful performance as an erstwhile idealist wrenched from his refuge of illusions by a crushing self-knowledge. But the real fireworks are in the two women's predatory tug o' war that plays like a Western showdown. Director Paul Willis expertly torques the proceedings to their high-tension dénouement, while Tom Ontiveros' subtle lights and John Zalewski's rumbling sound effectively accent Callaghan's incisive language. [Inside] the Ford, 2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, L.A.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 & 7 p.m.; through May 1. (323) 461-3673. A Circle X Theatre Company production. (Bill Raden)