

8C THE MIAMI HERALD, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1989 5

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# Foreman offers a strong

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production of a flawed play

By **GEORGE CAPEWELL**

Special to The Herald

Sidney Kingsley's *Darkness at Noon* is a harrowing examination of the horrors of life in the Soviet Union during Joseph Stalin's reign of terror. Kingsley's taut drama, based on Arthur Koestler's award winning novel, is the Ruth Foreman Theatre's inaugural production at its new home at Barry University.

*Darkness at Noon* examines one man's nightmarish realization that he has been chosen for extermination for alleged crimes against a system he has spent his life promoting.

## **THEATER REVIEW**

### **DARKNESS AT NOON**

N.S. Rubashov is a onetime Red Army general and hero who on a cold, snowy March night in 1937 finds himself imprisoned for planning the assassination of the Soviet leader.

Rubashov knows the party is never wrong and that he will soon die. He should know, because he has ruthlessly enforced party discipline on hundreds of victims in the 20 years since the Revolution.

Rubashov spends most of his time in a dream state, locked in a cell without windows and having no connection to the passage of real time. Between brutal interrogations and suffering from a debilitating fever, Rubashov reflects on his life and what has gone wrong with his precious revolution.

*Darkness at Noon* features first-rate production values and solid ensemble performances, but the work itself has a cold, uninvolving style and an unrelenting tone.

Roger Pretto delivers a performance of force and imagination as

Rubashov, but his character is a self-involved man who fails to elicit an emotional connection. Pamela Stuart as Luba, the woman Rubashov should have loved, offers a hollow, uncertain portrayal. John Fionte as the ruthless interrogator Gletkin showcases a wide technical range and whips up a storm of controlled fury. Herb Goldstein as prisoner 402 is totally convincing.

Anthony Cywinski has come up with a clever, efficient and visually stunning set, and Joseph Adler's di-

rection is fully in sync with the play's muted, somber tone.

The new facility, which seats nearly three times as many people as the old Foreman theater at Florida International University, offers superb sight lines and an engaging ambience, but offers fewer opportunities for intimacy.

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**Cast:** Roger Pretto, John Fionte, Michael George Owens, Pamela Stuart, Tom Disney, John Felix, Edward Furs, Herb Goldstein, Sara-Page Hall, Rollin Jarrett,

Richard Liberty, Seth Steinger.

**Playwright:** Sidney Kingsley, based on the novel by Arthur Koestler.

**Director:** Joseph Adler.

**Set and Lighting Design:** Anthony Cywinski.

**Costumes:** Jeffery Phipps.

At the Ruth Foreman Theatre, Barry University, 11300 NE Second Ave., Miami Shores; Shows at 8 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday and Saturday-Sunday through Oct. 29; Tickets \$13.50-\$17, 895-SHOW.