



More Theatre

by Archie Rothman

Losers are winners in *The Grave White Way* at Hollywood's Hudson Backstage Theatre. The premise of this new musical, with music, lyrics and book by Joe Patrick Ward, is very unusual. It's a comic satire of five dead Broadway actors attempting to gain admittance into Musical Heaven by performing an "afterlife revue" of the disastrous flop musicals that condemned them to the musical theatre purgatory known as the Grave White Way. The production, directed by Sarah Gurfield, stars Craig A. Curtis, Joshua Finkel, Lesli Margherita, Amy Rutberg, Shannon Stoeke, and Joe Patrick Ward who also wrote the book, music and lyrics and accompanies his songs on the piano. There are many scenes too clever to be from losing shows, such as "Bury the Hatchet" with Lesli as Lindsey as Lizzie Borden describing she still "had an ax to grind." There are parodies of everything from *Grease* to *A Chorus Line* to *Into the Woods*, all performed by excellent singing talents. And there's a different guest star at each performance to add their celebrity turn. Kay Cole's choreography and musical staging and the direction of Sarah Gurfield are all top-notch. If you enjoyed *Forbidden Broadway*, you will surely enjoy *The Grave White Way* and its clever lampoons of could-be hits. You may feel as I do, that its take-offs of winners could be winners themselves. It's scheduled to end June 17th at the Hudson Backstage Theatre at 6537 Santa Monica Blvd. But it surely will be held over. here or elsewhe e.



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Lesli Margherita & Amy Rutberg in *The Grave White Way* at the Hudson Theatre