

LAWEEKLY

STAGE

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KINGDOM COME

Reviewed by Steven Leigh Morris

Originally a work from the Andes discovered in Bolivia, *The Tragedy of the End of Atau Wallpa* is a lament about the arrival of the Conquistadors and the inevitable demise of the Incas. It was translated from the Quechuan language into Spanish by Jesús Lara, and

here has been adapted into English by director Dan Oliverio. Eleven actors provide narrations from all corners of the globe, each focused on some impending catastrophe, from the bombing of Hiroshima and the Holocaust to various disasters in Kansas, Indonesia, Carthage and Mongolia. The production then settles into the dreams of an Inca chief and priestess, who see visions of “red-bearded men” floating on the sea and arriving with spikes and steel on their legs. This noble ensemble effort gets tripped up by the unwavering portrait of unshakable, unyielding, unequivocating conquerors barking orders in a language (here depicted as foot stomping) of which the comparatively docile Inca have no comprehension. Though a fascinating spin on an ancient document, it nonetheless follows the Incas’ ride along a straight highway to oblivion. Some curves in the road might have been diverting. Diana Wyenn’s costumes nicely capture the production’s reach into all corners of the globe, and the span of the centuries, and Chris Covic’s beautiful set design has a rope ladder ascending into the upstage wall while the motifs of planks extend along the sides of the stage. Unknown Theater, 1110 N. Seward St., Hlywd.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 6 p.m.; thru June 28. (323) 466-7781 or www.unknowntheater.com.