

Recommended

ECSTASY AND THE ICE QUEEN Justine Moore's autobiographical solo performance offers a darkly funny reminiscence of growing up in Taos, New Mexico. In brief expository segments between scenes, Moore explains that when white hippies migrated to Taos in the late 1960s, the traditional culture of the Native Americans and "Native Spanish" was disrupted because the whites were unable or unwilling to maintain the land. Power struggles over water rights ensue, and by the time Moore reaches high school in the 1980s, long-simmering racial tensions are boiling over, with interracial dating earning a beating — or worse. However, racial hostilities are put aside for "ragers," alcohol- and drug-fueled parties that unite warring factions under the universal teenage banner of getting wasted. As a performer, Moore demonstrates a facility for vocal nuance, creating distinct identities for the characters, including the town bully, a "Native Spanish" hunk, her best friend, Crystal, and an assortment of town wastrels. The writing is sharp and darkly humorous, the piece smartly directed by Frederick Johntz, who developed *Ecstasy and the Ice Queen* with Moore. Max Pierson's lighting design emphasizes the various shades of adolescent angst. Taos Girl Productions at the Elephant Stage Theater, 1078 N. Lillian Way, Hlywd.; Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m.; thru May 7. (323) 960-7846. (Sandra Ross)

