

LA WEEKLY

FEBRUARY 19-FEBRUARY 25, 1993

UNPREDICTABLE WOMEN AND MONSTERS Whatever lies at the core of writer-actor Nell Stewart's artistic vision, it packs a wallop. This play explores the dynamism of conflict (psychological, emotional, spiritual) and its effect on the interior life of a woman (Stewart) who uses impressionist monologues to re-create images and tragic moments from her life in a ritual of self-expression and purgation. This takes place in her apartment, a set (by Stewart) consisting of a bed, sofa and table, which subtly suggests gender commonality, for Stewart is an Everywoman figure. Her odyssey often assumes surrealism as she drifts from past to present, fantasy to reality, sketching scenarios of sexual adventures, failed relationships, childhood fears and traumas, and quiet moments alone. There is a compelling physicality in her performance; she is rarely at rest, often pacing the stage, flailing at the winds or reacting to a troubling thought or memory with a fit of rage or a scream. She uses the audience as both a confessor and antagonist, and this, combined with her furious energy, is nearly hypnotic in its effect. Haunted Studios, 6419 Hollywood Blvd.; Thurs.-Sat., 8.p.m.; thru Feb. 20. (213) 850-8925. (LE3)