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# SummerWorks 2009 - Montparnasse and The Middle Place

reviewed by Paula Citron

### **SummerWorks 2009**

*Montparnasse (created by Maev Beaty, Andrea Donaldson and Erin Shields)*

*Directed by Andrea Donaldson*

*Starring Maev Beaty and Erin Shields*

*The Middle Place (created by Andrew Kushnir)*

*Directed by Alan Dilworth*

*Starring Akosua Amo-Adem, Antonio Cayonne, Paul Dunn, Jessica Greenberg and Kevin walker*

*At Theatre Passe Muraille until Aug. 16*

Of the four plays I saw on the opening night of SummerWorks, two deserve mention.

Maev Beaty and Erin Shields have come up with pure gold in *Montparnasse*, directed by Andrea Donaldson. The focus is two artists'



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models living in Paris in the 1920s, and their fictional stories are cunningly interwoven with Paris' real life artistic and literary circles. The script is as sophisticated as it is compelling, and the brilliant use of nudity gilds the lily. In fact, everything about this show is perfection.

Andrew Kushnir interviewed both the staff and residents at a homeless youth shelter for *The Middle Place*. The stage is sparse to allow the five actors to move easily from one character to the next, and director Alan Dilworth insures their individuality. Although docudrama is not new, Kushnir's play manages to be both engaging and disturbing. The cast is strong but actress Akosua Amo-Adem is simply sensational.

Both plays are at Theatre Passe Muraille. SummerWorks continues until Aug. 16.

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