

FULL MOON KILLER

REVIEWED BY
MICHAEL SOMMERS

Squat Theater, that radical and unique performance troupe which originated in Hungary in the late 1960s, has presented a number of notable productions since it came to New York in 1977, including the phantasmagoric "Dreamland Burns" in 1986, and the scary yet fantastic "L-Train to Eldorado" in 1988.

His latest show, "Full Moon Killer," is clearly a piece in progress, being the third and final segment of a longer work called "Killing Time." Properly judging it is impossible at this time, because the first two sections of the trilogy have yet to be created, and "Full Moon Killer" cannot be performed all by itself. All of the motivations, quirks, and connections of its characters remain unknown to viewers.

Like many other Squat works, Stephan Balint's script for "Full Moon Killer" concerns the dirty and hopeless fringes of our urban society. There's a hooker. Crack-burnt jail prisoners. A graffiti-spraying kid skidding around on a skateboard. A bantam-weight boxer. A commentator, whose head is encased in a television set, is identified as "Spice Lee." And there's a serial killer quietly roaming about the desolate streets, his face hidden by a mask of the moon. Some characters die; there's a red-hot jail monologue about a car chase; the dark moon sails over the ruined cityscape.

These images, characters, and speeches in this 50-minute piece hold promise for an intriguing whole, but not until Balint puts the entire "Kill-

ing Time" production together will this particular section make a satisfying event.

Roy Nathanson's jazzy saxophone riffs add bluesy overtones to the bleal yet beautiful scene designed by Eva Buchmuller and Jan Gontarczyk. Sparingly and effectively lit by Michael Chybowski, the excellent trompe l'oeil and figurative painting of the single set adds depth and a mystical quality to the piece. Connie Kieltyka's sound design also furthers the surreal atmosphere. Balint's actual staging seems a bit perfunctory, however, but he will probably find better rhythms when he directs the entire trilogy as one event.

The acting company, none of whom are identified by their roles in the play, includes Eszter Balint, Michael Thomas, Augustin Rodriguez, Kelvin Garvanne, Michael Strumm, David Lee, Nelson Nazario, Delroy Simpson, Masashi Ohtsu and Richard Jones. The performers who enacted the gritty jail sequence did a particularly persuasive job.

*"Full Moon Killer,"
presented by Squat Theater
at The Kitchen, 512 W.
19th St., Jan. 3-Jan. 13.*