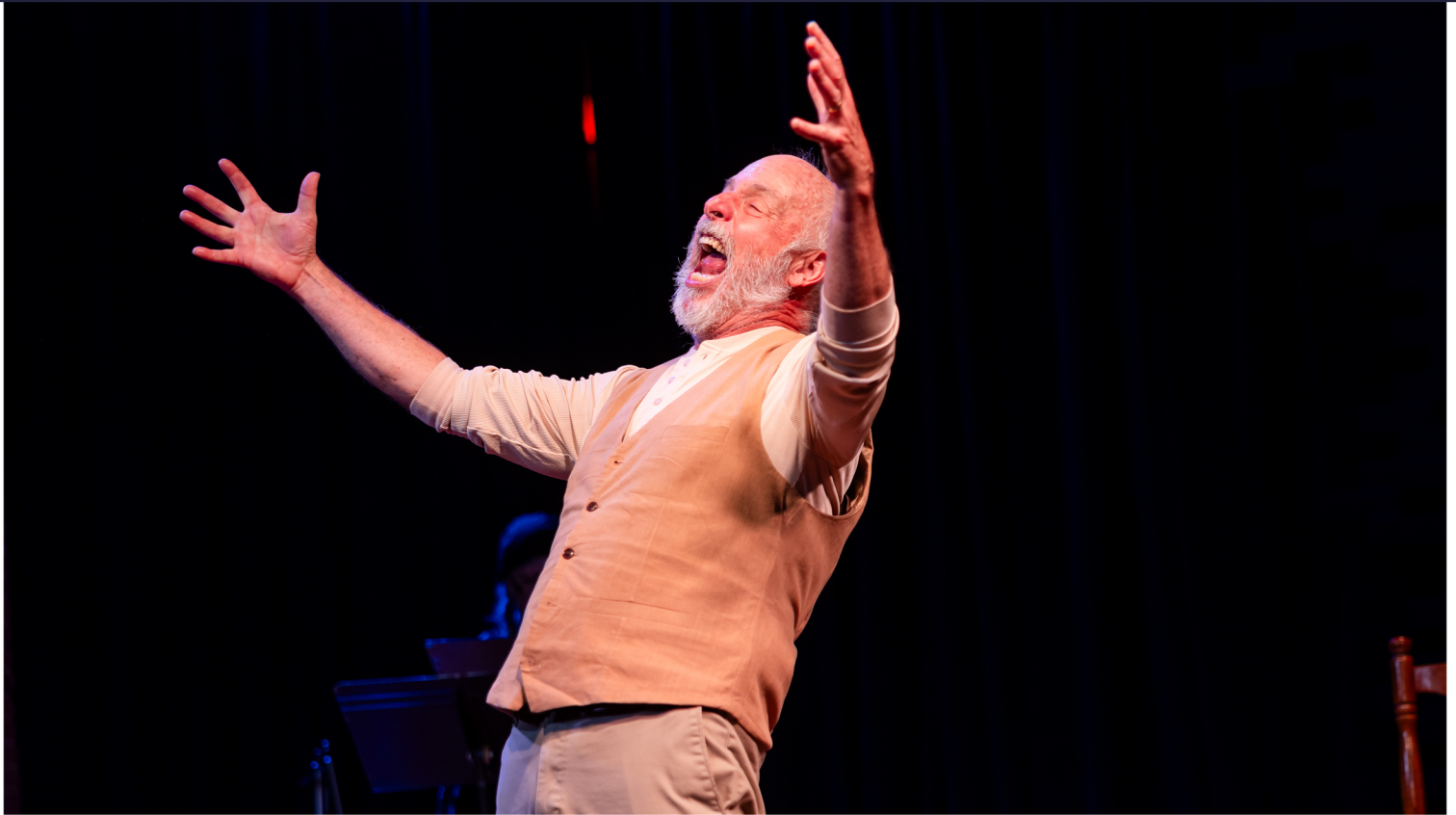


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Bill Harley in "An Iliad" Source: Courtesy of Burbage Theatre Company

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Review: 'An Iliad' a Spellbinding Meditation on War

JOE SIEGEL

Burbage Theatre Company's "An Iliad" is a spellbinding meditation on love, vengeance, pride, and the absurdity of war.

Bill Harley, a two-time Grammy winner, plays The Poet, the storyteller in Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare's adaptation of the ancient Homeric epic. In what basically amounts to a solo show – though with accompaniment by Cathy Clasper-Torch – Harley narrates the story of the Greek war against the Trojans, a war precipitated by the abduction of Helen of Troy by Paris, the son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba. Helen was reputed to be the most beautiful woman in the world – hence the war, as well as the modern catchphrase "the face that launched a thousand ships."

Greek hero Achilles is described as "superhuman." His enemy is Hector, a Trojan prince and the older brother of Paris. Hector is also the greatest warrior among the Trojans, and events inevitably draw the two warriors into a fateful showdown.

But not before Patroclus – Achilles' beloved friend, companion, and advisor – dons Achilles' armor in a moment of passion to fight against the Trojans. His impulsive act will have major ramifications for all involved.

