

*Love Alone: Elegies for Rog* is a rich, emotionally affecting, and ultimately wise work of theater. It translates the poetry of Paul Monette—words that are achingly sad and breathtakingly hopeful, often at the same time—into a profoundly moving performance that explores the boundaries of grief and loss, life and death. Monette wrote the poems for his lover, who was dying of AIDS at the peak of that awful plague. Today, with twin plagues of pandemic and rising homophobia afflicting our society so bitterly, Monette’s words speak resonantly to a contemporary audience.

Jonah Scott Mendelsohn has adapted the text for the stage and performs it eloquently in a single 80-minute act. Jonah finds the beating heart in Monette’s words and renders them vividly and with great clarity. He shows us a man who is facing down the final moments of the love of his life, and also, possibly, of his own life, railing against mortality and the tragic waste of a disease that targeted people who were somehow judged less worthy. Supported in this production by director Floyd Rumohr and a small team of designers, Jonah has created a solo work of depth and beauty that leaves the audience pondering the power and meaning, not only of the language of the play, but of the sorrowful messages it imparts.

I know I found myself falling deeper and deeper into the spell of the poetry and the performance as *Love Alone* moved toward its paradoxically life-affirming climax. Jonah harnesses the power of live theater to make immediate the words and ineffable notions of a writer tragically gone long before his time. In my 20+ plus years reviewing and publishing new American plays, I’ve learned to recognize a piece of art that deserves further development and a long fruitful life; Jonah Scott Mendelsohn’s *Love Alone: Elegies for Rog* is just such a work.

- Martin Denton, *Director Emeritus, The League of Independent Theater*