

Mommy issues take center stage

BY PHILIP BRANDES

'Die Mommie Die' by LATW

The essentials: L.A. Theatreworks presents Charles Busch's campy homage to "psycho-biddies" of 1960s low-budget movie melodramas that marked the last career gasps of Joan Crawford, Bette Davis and other divas. Think "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?" or "Die! Die! My Darling!" laced with over-the-top "Electra"-fying hysteria.

Why this? Revised by Busch for LATW's radio broadcast format with additional dialog, this limited run features the author in full cross-dressing regalia, reprising his stage and film role as the homicidal has-been pop star-from-hell who terrorizes her equally damaged family. Also performing is Mark Capri, who

costarred with Busch in the play's first production in 1999 at L.A.'s Coast Playhouse. Another original cast member, Carl Andress, directs.

Details: An L.A. Theatreworks production at James Bridges Theatre, 235 Charles E. Young Drive, Los Angeles. 8 p.m. Friday, 3 and 8 p.m. Saturday, 4 p.m. Sunday. Ends Sunday. \$45-\$65. (310) 827-0889, latw.org