



PAUL DIMALANTA

“**HYPE MAN**” at the Fountain Theatre examines social conscience. With Matthew Hancock, left, Clarissa Thibeaux and Chad Addison.

# Rising to meet a challenge

BY PHILIP BRANDES

## ‘Hype Man’ at the Fountain

**The essentials:** Poised on the brink of stardom, a white rapper, his black hype man and their female mixed-race beat maker find their partnership strained to the limits after a police shooting. Friendship and career ambitions collide with social conscience and personal demons in the West Coast premiere of Idris Goodwin’s music-infused “break beat play.”

**Why this?** The Fountain Theatre continues its stellar track record of outreach with this keenly observed immersion in hip-hop culture and the social conditions that animate it. Rap fans may appreciate the play’s dialogue and sensibility (playwright Goodwin is also an MC), yet there’s insight for all in the creative process and realities of the music business.

**Details:** Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., Los Angeles. 8 p.m. Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays; ends April 14. \$40-\$45. (323) 663-1525, [fountaintheatre.com](http://fountaintheatre.com)