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Barra Grant wrote and performs "Miss America's Ugly Daughter: Bess Myerson & Me" at Greenway Court. (Darrett Sanders)

'Miss America's Ugly Daughter' at Greenway Court

by Margaret Gray

The Essentials: So many women struggle to step out of their mother's shadow. It's a harrowing, heartbreaking, hilarious lifelong journey for writer and performer Barra Grant, the daughter in a very tall shadow cast by Bess Myerson. The first Jewish Miss America, Myerson evolved into a television personality and then a successful New York politician until she fell from grace in the 1980s in a bribery scandal that the tabloids dubbed "the Bess Mess" (though she was acquitted of all charges). As Grant convincingly and hilariously observes in this one-woman show (with offstage dialogue provided by

Monica Piper), Myerson was a tough act to follow.

Why this? Grant's show, which had a sold-out run last summer at the Broad Stage, spins her childhood traumas into occasionally painful, ultimately uplifting comic gold.

Details: Greenway Court Theatre, 544 N. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles. Opens 8 p.m. Friday. Regular performances 8 p.m. Saturdays, 6 p.m. Sundays, 8 p.m. Mondays; ends March 24. \$25-\$40. (323) 285-2078, MissAmericasUglyDaughter.com.