



newspapers v web sites v magazines v your town v classifieds v partners v advertise v help v

Submit

**"FREE? I DON'T GET IT."**

**Don't be stupid. Sell it for free.** **3C depot**

pittsburgh3Cdepot.com

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW. Trib pm TRIBUNE-REVIEW. Daily Courier Valley News Dispatch Valley LEADER & TIMES



**PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW**

Advanced Search search

[View all stories by date](#)

**BIG-MOUTH BLOGGERS**



**Heyl's Half Acre**

[View all Heyl columns](#)

**Hot Seat**

[View all Seate columns](#)

**SPECIAL REPORTS**

- [Pittsburgh Slots](#)
- [Cold Cases](#)
- [Capitol Cash Grab](#)

[All Special Reports](#)

**MULTIMEDIA**

[All Multimedia](#)

**NEWS**

- City & Region
- Westmoreland
- Fayette
- State
- Nation
- World
- Top News
- You're the Editor
- Politics
- Storms
- Iraq
- Bird Flu
- Most Read Articles

**SPORTS**

- Steelers
- Penguins
- Pirates
- College
- High School
- Columnists
- Top Sports

**PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW**

[Back to headlines](#)

TT Larger Text Ttr Smaller Text

**'Grey Zone' takes unflinching look at real-life horrors**

By **Alice T. Carter**  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW THEATER CRITIC  
Saturday, November 4, 2006

We've come to expect the exceptional from barebones productions, and "The Grey Zone" delivers.

Tim Blake Nelson's bleak and troubling drama of prisoners inside the Nazi-operated concentration camp Auschwitz in German-occupied Poland goes where few Holocaust stories are willing to go.

Based on Miklos Nyiszli's book "Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account," "The Grey Zone" focuses on Hungarian Jews who have relinquished nearly every shred of their moral and ethical fiber in their attempts to buy just a little more life for themselves or family members.

Bingo O'Malley plays a doctor who volunteered his services when he arrived at Auschwitz as a prisoner. His days are spent autopsying and reporting on the corpses of children tortured and murdered for the notorious Nazi Dr. Josef Mengele's experiments on twins.

**'The Grey Zone'**

Produced by: barebones productions

**When:** Continues through Nov. 19 at 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, 7 p.m. Sundays

**Admission:** Suggested donation, \$10-\$15

**Where:** Cultural District Center North Building, sixth floor, 121 Seventh St., Downtown

**Details:** 412-363-5847, or [www.barebonesproductions.com](http://www.barebonesproductions.com)

**Top Stories**

**Local Sports**

- [Steelers keep hopes alive](#)
- [Parker drives point home](#)
- [Steelers need help -- and lots of it](#)
- [Talbot shows his versatility](#)

[Read All Local Sports](#)

**National News**

- [2 climbers may have fallen and died](#)
- [Rapist preys on men in](#)

- ADVERTISEMENT -

**Add more jingle to your holidays!**

**Sell your stuff for cash**

O'Malley plays with a weariness, resignation and clinical efficiency that barely and opaquely protects his character from the conflict and repulsion he

- Major League Baseball
- Hockey
- Basketball
- Tennis
- Sports Week Gallery

**BUSINESS**

- News
- Stocks & Mutual Funds Listings
- Downtown
- Development
- Columnists
- Top Business
- Technology
- Business Wire

**OPINION & COMMENTARY**

- Editorials
- Cartoons
- Columnists
- Letters

**LIVING**

- Entertainment
- Fanfare
- Fashion and Shopping
- Fine Arts
- Food & Drink
- Home and Garden
- Movies
- Theater
- Top Living
- Summer Tours
- Tickets

**OBITUARIES**

**TODAY IN HISTORY**

**CENSUS**

**ABOUT US**

- Help Desk
- Contact Us
- Frank L. Craig, Editor
- Robert Fryer, Managing Editor
- Joe Chudicek, Multimedia Editor



represses.

Four others -- Gregory Johnstone, Patrick Jordan,

Mark Tierno and Randy Kovitz -- portray Sonderkommandos, prisoners themselves who led their fellow prisoners into the gas chambers and later removed their bodies to the crematorium for incineration.

They create a complex and varied group of individuals who alternate between pride and repugnance for the work they do while squabbling among themselves and distrusting and betraying each other.

This is a tough show to watch.

The setting -- a bare industrial space of exposed wooden beams and rough brick walls -- is surgically clean and properly claustrophobic. Random offstage sounds compound the feelings of inescapable horror and the casual acceptance of death.

Through two 45 minute acts, everyone -- even the Nazi soldier Mushfeldt, played by Mark Staley -- is forced to choose not between bad and worse but between horrific and unbearably horrific.

The Sonderkommandos have resigned and deadened themselves to the choices they have made. They also know that there's little hope they'll do more than prolong their lives by a few days or weeks. Sonderkommando teams rarely worked longer than three or four months before they themselves were led into the gas chamber.

They're realistic enough to know that the pressure to move them along is intensifying as Allied troops move closer. The Nazis don't want these workers around to testify.

But the Sonderkommandos are not completely resigned to their circumstances. They're planning a camp-wide revolt and to blow up the crematoria. Even this bit of hope comes undone when they discover a young girl, played by Chelsea Mervis, who has somehow survived the gas chamber.

They risk sacrificing the revolt to save her.

An upbeat ending is beyond possibility.

No easy or pleasant answers are possible.

Nevertheless, director Jason Nodler stages a hypnotic and compelling journey that sheds a harsh and momentary light on a dark and troubling piece of history and some deeply disturbing personal questions.

You come away from "The Grey Zone" marveling at the sacrifices people will make to stay alive even in the worst of circumstances. But you're also forced to confront the troubling question of what you might be do in similar circumstances.

Alice T. Carter can be reached at [acarter@tribweb.com](mailto:acarter@tribweb.com) or (412) 320-7808.

[Back to headlines](#)

- Houston area
  - Norovirus eyed in Olive Garden sickness
  - [Read All National News](#)
- National Sports**

- Nuggets' Anthony suspended for 15 games
- Buckeyes look to avoid the Heisman jinx
- NFL fines Cowboys' Owens for spitting

- [Read All National Sports](#)
- Obituaries**

- Obituaries in the news
- 'Rocky and Bullwinkle' writer dies a 81
- Bahrain's leading Shiite cleric dies
- Former Montana St. player dies in crash

- [Read All Obituaries](#)
- Strange**

- Scottish troops must share scarce kilts
- Men try to smuggle birds in pocket, pack
- Woman accused in Christmas card pot plot

- [Read All Strange](#)
- Living**

- Giuliana DePandi engaged to Bill Rancic
- Online vote says Spears worst dog owner
- Berlin opera house re-stages 'Idomeneo'

- [Read All Top Living](#)
- Technology**

- Imbalance in Net speeds impedes sharing
- Net imbalance stem from tech constraints
- Oracle 2Q earnings match analyst views

- [Read All Technology](#)
- Tools**

- [Print this article](#)

**CUSTOMIZED  
RSS NEWS  
FEEDS**

- [What is RSS?](#)
- [Staff Blogs](#)
- [Newspapers in Education](#)
- [AP Podcasts](#)

-  [E-mail this article](#)
-  [Subscribe to this paper](#)
-  [Larger / Smaller Text](#)



**Today's Most-Read Articles**


1. [Brown: Steelers keep hopes alive](#)
2. [Prisuta: Steelers need help -- and lots of it](#)
3. [Harris: Steelers are revived, still relevant](#)
4. [Junker: Arena drama still unraveling](#)
5. [Harris: Parker drives point home](#)

**Today's Most-Sent Articles**

1. [As 80th birthday nears, Paterno still has focus](#)
2. [Jeannette junior suffers from lacerated liver](#)
3. [Parents feel left behind by curriculum](#)
4. [For USC, it's mission accomplished](#)
5. [City foundations can't 'Promise' funding](#)

[Click here for advertising information](#) || [List all Advertisers](#)

**Add more jingle to your holidays.**  
 Sell your stuff for cash on **3C**depot<sup>®</sup>  
[www.pittsburgh3cdepot.com](http://www.pittsburgh3cdepot.com)



Reproduction or reuse prohibited without written consent from Tribune-Review Publishing Co.