

THE DAILY GAZETTE



SECTION D
FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2005

LESLIE AYYAZIAN delivers a fascinating performance in her show "High Dive" at Adirondack Theatre Festival. DB

THEATER REVIEW

'High Dive' a definite crowd-pleaser

BY BOB COUTURE
For The Daily Gazette

GLENS FALLS— Leslie Ayyazian mesmerized theater-goers at a well-attended performance Wednesday night of the opening of her one-woman show, "High

Dive." It is at once autobiographical and immensely entertaining.

By her own admittance, this is the first time in a while she has resurrected this work. And at least from this reviewer's standpoint, she did not miss a beat in this presentation, a little more than an hour long. In it, she touched on her many adventures and always made for interesting listening and viewing.

Ayyazian has a wonderful stage presence and an easy way of going from one topic to another without showing any strain and with an endless stream of timely anecdotes that seemed to connect with her audience.

In addition, she had a bevy of helpers, some 35 or so, who supported her by reciting prepared lines that seemed to come from the audience. This trick worked well and constantly kept the house in touch with what was going on.

The center of all the attention

'High Dive'

WHERE: Adirondack Theatre Festival, Charles R. Woods Theater, 207 Glen St., Glens Falls.

WHEN: 8 p.m. Wednesdays to Saturdays through July 16

HOW MUCH: \$25

MORE INFO: 798-9663

was Leslie on a diving board looking into cool water in Greece, where she was urged by both her husband and son to jump. The challenge led to a bag of adventures that melded quite well one into the other. I leave it to you to find out whether she jumped and ultimately conquered her fears about water.

The adventures were many, the most interesting being her academic schooling in Vermont and its consequences and her battles with the Swiss Alps and their perceived treacherousness.



Ayyazian

One other point in her favor was Ayyazian's wonderful ability to treat everything with comic relief, bringing the audience along with her and never descending into the pseudo-serious in any of her adventures. True, at times she was afraid, but Ayyazian never let that get the better of her and always felt like a victor.

Ayyazian also has a large number of dramatic pieces to her credit, and continues to perform and write contemporary scores that have played all over the world.

For a unique performance, one should see "High Dive." It is a show that will stick with you and help you realize a personalized experience. Go to see it by all means.