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*A Clockwork Orange* has a fascinating history. The original novella by Anthony Burgess was published in Britain in 1962. A final chapter was omitted from the 1966 American version on which Stanley Kubrick based his 1971 film. After many requests from theatre companies, Burgess created a definitive script adaptation (with last chapter) content intact) that premiered at the Royal National Theatre in 1990 and has been produced at such prestigious companies as Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre.

The Studio Theatre Secondstage tackles *A Clockwork Orange* with aplomb that proves "Secondstage" doesn't mean "second class" to the Studio folks. Many current Washingtonians don't know that The Studio Theatre made its home from 1979 to 1987 in the church street facility that, until recently, housed the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. It's in that space that *A Clockwork Orange* makes its home- the final occupant before the facility vanishes to make way for progress of the Starbucks variety.

As if paying homage to D.C. "sacred" theatrical ground isn't enough reason to race down at once, *A Clockwork Orange* features a fascinating, all-encompassing performance space around which runs a multigenerational cast exploding with energy and talent. It's no small feat- for either cast or audience- to commit to Burgess's world of "ultra-violence" and government-mandated morality. Graphic, brutal images abound, and although tempered with crafty, albeit bleak, wit- the future of *A Clockwork Orange* is an unsettling place to observe.

Scot McKenzie delivers a splendid interpretation of Alex, the mayhem-wreaking ringleader of teen thugs who becomes a guinea pig for criminal reform through the forced elimination of the ability to choose one's actions. Suzanne Richard also stands out in a campy- yet- troubling rendition of Dr. Brodksy, who could be mad or simply heartless.

This production of *A Clockwork Orange* is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Be sure to catch it before time runs out.