

Let's  
GO!

## THE ARTS

### IF YOU GO

► **What:** Off-Center/On-Stage Festival: *God's Country*, *Sabina's Splendid Brain* and *Vigil* in rotating repertory.

► **When:** 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Sunday, 2, 5 and 9 p.m. Saturday through Jan. 31.

► **Where:** Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, 1127 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine

► **Tickets:** \$12, students and seniors \$10. 421-3555.

# Out of the ordinary

## Ensemble Theatre's annual festival showcases edgy works

BY JACKIE DEMALINE  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

### Witness to history

*Sabina* is Sabina Spielrein, an emotionally disturbed Russian girl who arrived in Zurich and into the care of Carl Jung in 1902. She was the first patient on whom Jung practiced the psychoanalytic "talking cure."

In the next 10 years, she became Jung's lover, a friend to Sigmund Freud, a psychoanalyst, wrote breakthrough works specializing in children and worried — perhaps with reason — about Jung stealing her concepts.

She returned home to Russia, lived through the Russian revolution and World War I but, as a Russian Jew, didn't survive the Nazis.

It was an eventful life, performed here by Naomi Bailis to the accompaniment of a cello. Cincinnati Youth Orchestra member Yuri Hart, 17, arranged and performs a score that ranges from Metallica to international folk music to Saint-Saens.

It's a one-woman show, and it's a showcase for its director Gyllian Raby who uses music and video to flesh out the drama. She also uses a stage better than anyone outside Playhouse in-the Park.



Photos by  
Michael  
Snyder/The  
Cincinnati  
Enquirer

Naomi Bailis,  
top, and Yuri  
Hart in a scene  
from *Sabina's  
Splendid Brain*.

UtterKiosk

ONSTAGE

## 'Off'ul Good

*ETC* features strong acting  
and directing in offbeat show

REVIEW BY RICK PENDER

*Sabina's Splendid Brain* by Carol Sinclair offers a showcase for Naomi Bailis, another outstanding local actor. This brief piece (it's just an hour long) re-creates the presence of Sabina Spielrein, a real woman who knew the pioneers of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. She claims, in fact, to have given them many of their ideas. But she was also Jung's patient, and we must wonder if her claims are the ramblings of a delusional woman or a genius whose ideas and reputation were stolen by others.

Spielrein's dreams and recollections are seen in video projection, transient images, only half-recognizable. Cellist Yuri Hart's music and presence weave in and out of Sabina's monologue. Hart starts in darkness overhead, moves into the scene, plays several riffs lying on the analyst's couch and the floor, and moves out of the scene again. He seems almost a distillation of Spielrein's emotions.

Bailis, who also plays Jung and Freud to open and close the piece, is a pleasure to watch. She possesses the stage in a way few actresses in one-woman shows are capable (much more effectively, by the way, than Brenda Vaccaro in *ETC's Full Gallop* last fall). A very physical presence, she dances through this role, stretching, jumping, posing, running — her physical agitation becomes a literal representation of her frantic mind. Bailis creates a fascinating whole and joyous woman, whether she's real or not.