

Tragedy and Thrill, San Juan Hill's Radium Girls is a Radiating Success!
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"Radium Girls" centers on events in 1920s New Jersey, where three young girls' lives are put into emotional turmoil when disturbing deaths occur. These girls undertake a court case against the Radium Plant Corporation to correct the injustices they faced, all while battling radium poisoning and time.

Capitalizing on radium's success, Arthur Roeder (Jacob Koclanis) cleverly portrays the iron-fisted, charismatic president. When the corporation is faced with legal aversion, Koclanis embodies a cunning, authoritative tone through rigid finger points and cutthroat glares. Expressing his range of emotions, a moment of tenderness and deep guilt trickle down his face. Koclanis's characterization delivers a compelling, corrupted leader.

Bright-eyed and giggly, the dial painters, Grace (Julia Tonai), Kathryn (Viola Whitaker), and Irene (Olivia Lam) display their ignorant enthusiasm with girly gossip. But they slowly deteriorate. Tonai shifts believably from youthful energy being hunched over and hobbling, dependent on her cane. Their physicality weakens and becomes stiff and sickly, no longer resembling playful little girls. With furrowed eyebrows and vocal shrieks, Whitaker commands the stage with force and a desire for answers when filing a complaint for Irene's death. Her face fluidly emotes between anger, determination, and distress.

During scene changes, Irene and Kathryn eerily prowl in synchronization on stage, leaning into each step as they push the clock hands, signifying time running out to win the case. Owen Pasternak and his Lighting crew, illuminates the stage in glowing shamrock green, crafting an otherworldly, terrifying, dream-like nightmare. Collaborating with Set Design, Hair & Makeup, and Props, Lighting intertwines UV green paint into different facets of the production.

Looming over ominously, Set Design (Killian Krohn, and Jason Crout) construct the towering clock that raises tension with every passing scene. Inspired by factory-high buildings, they design huge, open windows that allow streaking orange light. Set Design covers the UV green paint onto railings and doorknobs and as the show progresses, the light is activated, glowing in decay.

Hair & Makeup designers Chloe Ward and Vanessa Roselli, make Irene haunting and decrepit by applying bone-chilling prosthetics that expose her jaw and rotten mouth. As the girls age, they smear red on their jaws alluding to radium poisoning coming to fruition.

In a riveting drama about the commercialization of radium and the fight against injustice, San Juan Hills illustrates the hardships of a Radium Girl.