

“Steelbound’s” remarkable requiem

The Bethlehem Gadfly Arts, the, Fun Stuff, Touchstone Theater September 28, 2019

(7th in a series of posts on Touchstone Theatre)

“One time there was so many jobs.”

“And so we’ve come to the end of your world.”

In a remarkable scene in a play filled with remarkable scenes, *Steelbound* calls the roll of the jobs that have ceased and the buildings that housed them in those “five miles of buildings.”

Like Walt Whitman in those “Song of Myself” catalogues of American diversity, *Steelbound* names and ennobles each and every aspect of working life in the mill.

This is a cluster of obituaries culminating in a mass burial.

But there is no whining and mewling.

The voices of the steelworkers as they contribute a tool of their trade to a fire-less funeral pyre are still strong, still proud.

They have laid down their tools, but they have not laid down their lives.

The epitaph is simple, without melancholy, and is about birth not death:

“The first iron was made here on this spot in 1863.”

And the sounds of the mill that frame this ritual requiem are literally a deafening reminder of the almost superhuman power that was BETHLEHEM STEEL.

Festival UnBound

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