

The New Yorker

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Goings On About Town

The Theatre

THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY

The Civilians—that scrappy band of stage documentarians helmed by Steven Cosson—travelled to Colorado Springs in 2006 to observe an evangelical community that, while they were there, was torn apart by the sordid accusations against its figurehead, Ted Haggard. With wit and empathy, the group reenacts, splices, and, in inspired instances, musicalizes the interviews they conducted of local residents, from a transgendered woman struggling to reconcile her Christian faith to the God-fearing folks at RHOP—Revolution House of Prayer. Aside from their theatrical panache, the Civilians deserve credit as top-notch journalists, creating portraits that are vivid, agenda-free, and marked by a benevolent irony. Their investigation probes not only the absurdity of American dogma but the unquenchable thirst for redemption that propels it. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 212-353-0303.)