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Oswald Play Fails to Speed London Pulse

LONDON, Nov. 24 — "The Silence of Lee Harvey Oswald," a play about President Kennedy's accused assassin, got lukewarm reviews today at its world premiere.

The 2½-hour drama by Michael Hastings, based on the 26-volume Warren Commission report and interviews with Oswald's mother and Russian-born wife, is a detailed study of the slain Oswald's character.

Verbatim breakdowns of the two women's statements were cleverly used for episodes in which the author tries to reconstruct Oswald's domestic life and quarrels.

When key points of the witnesses' replies were reached, the action faded into one of the imaginary scenes.

There were short film sequencies taken at the time of the events and some stills of the real-life characters — including President Kennedy.

David Nathan of the Sun said: "In a major sense, the play fails. At the end, we know no more about Oswald than any cursory reading of evidence could bring."

The Times said: "Oswald, despite the exhaustive investigation into his background, remains an impenetrable figure."

Herbert Kretzmer of the Daily Express said:

"Oswald was a dour, humorless and violent man—beyond his mother's understanding, beyond his wife's, beyond Mr. Hasting's and beyond ours."