

'A Boy and His Soul' captivates

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WHAT "A Boy and his Soul"

WHERE Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St.

INFO \$55; 212-353-0303; vineyardtheatre.org

BOTTOM LINE Marvelous soul-bearing

Forget how weary we are of autobiographical solos, forget the limitations of their form and the inevitable redundancy of all those heartfelt coming-of-age stories.

Colman Domingo's "A Boy and His Soul" makes every one of them fresh and new again- even the coming-out phone call to his doting mother. This is a marvelous 90-minute tragicomedy, which just happens to be told by one astonishing actor/dancer/

singer, who brings his entire family - and friends of families - to life in his long, spidery bones.

Domingo created three irrepressibly original characters in the musical "Passing Strange" on Broadway. Clearly, those were just a start. He begins here with a simple bit of information: "My parents were selling the house I grew up in." He then burrows into the meaning of that life-marker through the nerve endings of the '70s and '80s soul music that galvanized his family life.

He rummages through the LPs and eight-tracks left in the inner-city Philadelphia house. Each song cues memories that Domingo and director Tony Kelly refuse to turn mawkish. In hairpin changes of character and mood, the actor manages to be wicked, tender, outrageous and profound. And, every so often, a disco ball twinkles from a cardboard packing box. Lovely touch.