

weekly planet

BEST OF THE BAY 2005

BEST BEST-OF
ISSUE SINCE
LAST YEAR!

BEST PLAYWRIGHT Bill Leavengood

This last year we've seen a boomlet in works by area playwrights: Sean Sancel's *The Big Finish*, Neal Gobioff and Shawn Paonessa's *March of the Kitefliers*, T. Scott Wooten's *Mr. Wooten's Big Night* and Aubrey Hampton's *Christmas Gremlins*. But the best work by a local playwright wasn't produced here at all; it was shown up in New York at the Sanford Meisner Theatre. This was St. Petersburg scribe Bill Leavengood's *Little Mary*, about an adolescent virgin who finds herself pregnant with seven fetuses. As a cardinal and an archbishop battle over Mary's religious status, Leavengood asks us to think about the overpopulation of the earth, and the responsibilities it places on individuals — and religious institutions. Leavengood's writing is muscular and efficient, and his handling of intellectual debate is impressive. This year, no one else did it better.

