

is sparsely written, it evokes an extensive collection of memorable knuckleheads. There's Flan Dingle ("the essence of stench"), Ginger Boy (whose hair "was red enough it could stop traffic") and the mentally retarded brother of Rookie's one-night stand ("six feet tall, built like a human white puddin' ").

Mr. O'Rowe's tactile, blistering poetry is all his own, and so evocative that the smoke machines and sound effects that clutter up Nancy Malone's production are unnecessary. This is a play that doesn't need special effects. Just close your eyes and listen to the Seuss-like slang ("slappercopper" is a policewoman) and tangled syntax ("Lack of success with birds, I have," says Howie, sounding like Yoda at a pub), and let your imagination run wild.

*"Howie the Rookie" continues through Sunday at the Irish Arts Center, 553 West 51st Street, Clinton, (212) 868-4444.*

**Correction:** *May 26, 2005, Thursday:*

*A schedule note in The Arts yesterday with a theater review of "Howie the Rookie," at the Irish Arts Center in Manhattan, misstated the closing date. It is June 5, not this Sunday.*