

THE SHROUD HITS BROADWAY...

One supposes it had to happen, but one of the lesser known entertainment attractions on New York's Broadway has been a Shroud musical *Into the Light*, the brainchild of U.S. author Jeff Tambornino and lyricist John Forster.

So far as can be judged from reviews, the story is that of a sceptical physicist from Los Alamos, James Prescott (played by Dean Jones), who becomes involved in an American scientific team's attempts to test the Shroud. While for Shroud buffs this might seem an acceptable and familiar enough theme, a little harder to take is its treatment at the hands of Messrs Tambornino and Forster. Typical of the pearls of dialogue is James Prescott's remark on the Shroud "I've waited four years to get my hands on that rag". While he eventually achieves his goal, as critic Frank Rich commented in the *New York Times*:

... the audience at the Neil Simon Theater here must first survive an onslaught of boogeying nuns and more than a few songs with lyrics such as "science without data will not get you from alpha to beta" ... James and a hip Jesuit priest (William Parry) carry out their spiritual debates with all the intellectual heat of high school students executing math equations. While the composer, Lee Holdridge, has operatic and inspirational pretensions, his score is monotonous and insistent in the style of loud wallpaper. Nor can a few green lasers, seemingly left over from "Sunday in the Park with George", electrify a production whose solemn staging, choreography and design might be more appropriate to a requiem than a musical entertainment ... no star can carry a show that asks whether God is dead in a manner that's likely to bore Him to death if He's not.

Somewhere here there must be an opportunity for Andrew Lloyd Webber...!