

FB Review: Nyuntu Ngali (You We Two)

'Bang' - the crack of a whip, centre stage draws the attention of the audience to the opening of Nyuntu Ngali, a beautiful collaboration between Windmill and Big Hart. Directed by Scott Rankin and created as a result of many community workshops, Nyuntu Ngali can, on one level be summed up as a 'post apocalyptic Romeo and Juliet' but in reality there is more to this engaging tale than meets the eye.

The 22nd Century; general society and the earth's climate have dramatically changed. Lifestyles have been radically altered as a consequence and the audience is introduced to Eva (Anne Golding) and Roam (Derek Lynch) as they escape their pasts and the consequences of simply being in love. Golding and Lynch both shine in their respective roles, presenting their characters as realistically and honestly as possible. Trevor Jamieson, with a truly standout performance, narrates the tale from the point of view of Eva and Roam's newly born child, Petrol while adding social commentary on the 'future' which is a result of our current lifestyles. Nothing from the present is free from criticism; from advertising to the lax way in which we interact with one another - it is all held under the microscope of a character speaking in retrospect.

The performance is not of a traditional nature; combining various media, creative use of projected images, live music and dance, while presented in the versatile Space Theatre, it is a sight to behold. Imaginations can run wild when the actors utilize the intricate and beautiful 'object' designs of Elliot Rich to enhance the story telling process, while choreography from Gina Rings allows the emotions of the characters to be expressed by more than simply the use of language.

Language and its use also play an enormous role in this production, with phrases and words from the Pitjantjara language and society being interspersed with the English language and phrases. Mixing the language of the two cultures allows the story to develop in a smooth and natural manner while working to highlight some of the overall themes of love, social misconceptions and the need for understanding.

The talented Jennifer Wells and Beth Sometimes create the mesmerizing score which truly completes this performance, while Wells also contributes her talent for shadow-making through projections behind the actors. Lighting Director Nigel Levings creates a mood which subtly completes the atmosphere and mood of the performance.

Created for an audience above the age of 13, Nyuntu Ngali is a story for teens and adults alike, with a basic and ageless tale that simply bursts to be told. Running until the third of October Nyuntu Ngali is simply a story, an insight and multi-disciplinary performance like no other. With talent, heart and style like this Nyuntu Ngali is a rare gem.

Alicia Norton, Fringe Benefits, 28 Sep 2009

Nyuntu Ngali (You We Too)

Windmill Productions' first foray into a teenage market is Scott Rankin's *Nyuntu Ngali*, or (*You We Two*) in translation, developed in conjunction with the Mimili community and lovingly presented at the Space Theatre. It is a mesmerising and totally involving experience that runs for a non-stop seventy minutes. In a sense I should stop here and hope that curiosity will urge everyone to take any teenagers they have access to to see this performance.

The story is set in the year 2300 and constant references are made to things occurring in 2009; it is a fantasy of wishful and wistful thinking but that didn't impinge on my participation in the action. As the play starts Petrol, Trevor Jamieson, welcomes us to the land and establishes the rules of the presentation where aboriginal language and English are carefully intermixed. He shows us his parents: Eva, Anne Golding, a white girl and Roam, Derek Lynch, her aboriginal lover. Eva is pregnant with Petrol and the lovers are running into the wild to escape the wrath of the community over their relationship. Petrol remains the guide in action that is poetic, multi-faceted and driven by the music provided by on stage musicians Beth Sometimes and Jennifer Mills. And with the assistance of the most wonderful contraption that must be the prop to end all props.

And the characters' actions – an amalgam of modern dance and aboriginal movements choreographed by Gina Rings – carry them and us through trials in a land that is even less forgiving than the community which rejects Eva and Roam's love. Nigel Levings' lighting design storms and tantalises both the trio of actors and the audience... and suddenly it is all over. I must admit to feeling angry when I checked my watch: the program promised us seventy five minutes and the show was over in just seventy!

I was lucky enough to be sitting next to two sub-teen girls from the Mimili community and they took to the performance with delight, especially when they heard their own language on stage. The white teenager on the other side thought the performance was the best thing she had seen. With expert opinion like that can you resist it?

Myk Mykyta, Radio Adelaide *State of Play*, 28 Sep 2009.