



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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MEMMIE LE BLANC

Vitalstatistix Theatre Company

Queen's Theatre

Until 8 March 2008

Review by Brian Godfrey

Is what we are, inherent in us or taught? This question is the basis of Vitalstatistix and Western Australia's Deckchair Theatre co-production, "Memmie Le Blanc" by Hilary Bell.

Bell's well-written script is based on fact. In eighteenth century France, a 'feral' child emerged from the woods. She had no previous contact with humans nor had been reared by animals. The girl was given the name "Memmie Le Blanc" – a blank page to be written on.

Director Angela Chaplin has given us a superb production where everything comes together to present Adelaide with a riveting theatrical experience. Sound design (Phil Bailey) is natural and unobtrusive. Costume design (Isaac Lummins) is historically accurate, colourful and, in the case of the orang-utan, imaginative and effective. Andrew Lake's effective lighting includes some tight window-frame images and his jungle-gym set is stunning.

The cast (Anni Lindner, Adam McGurk, Sete Tele and Netta Yashchin) are excellent. This is a very physical and emotional play for all of them and their energy and talent never falter. Special mention of Tele for his brilliant physical characterisation of an orang-utan and Lindner for her magnificently poignant portrayal of the title role.

An excellent all-Australian production, it deserves to be well supported.

Rating: 4 Stars (out of 5).