THE UMBRELLA PLAYS
Accidental Productions
The Stables
Until 7 Mar 2010

Review by Brian Godfrey

Usually known for their thought-provoking, sometimes abstract works, Accidental Productions are, at the moment, presenting a fairly straight-forward show, “The Umbrella Plays” by Australian writer Cerise de Gelder.

De Gelder has written a selection of short plays using as their central theme the innocent umbrella and its uses for starting and ending relationships (marital, friendly and the mere meeting of strangers). Accidental Productions have selected eight of these and they are absolutely delightful.

Director Joh Hartog finds every laugh possible as well as a nice little emotional moment. He understands the plays and has a finely tuned cast at his disposal. He also understands some of the pitfalls of the venue, using a very awkward, unsightly support post, situated right at the front of the stage, to very good use several times throughout the production.

The ensemble cast of Mark Fantasia, Alex Vickery-Howe, Charlotte Rees, Katie O’Reilly, Jesse Butler and Mel Matheson are just great in all their various roles, proving again what talent there is amongst South Australia’s up and coming young actors.

The only real flaw with this production is, again, one of the venue - The Stables gobbles up noise (especially when the fans are on) mercilessly. On opening night, lines were lost by all actors, but once they are familiar with the quirks of their surroundings, this hitch should improve.

To paraphrase the song: let an umbrella be your smile - brighten up an already impressive 2010 Fringe with this little drop of entertainment.

Rating: 4 stars (out of 5)