



Adelaide Theatre Guide

www.theatreguide.com.au

Supporting live theatre in South Australia

PO Box 738
MODBURY SA 5092

info@theatreguide.com.au
ABN : 93 297 960 525

1984

State Theatre Company of South Australia

Her Majesty's Theatre

Until 27 May 2017

Review by Fran Edwards

George Orwell wrote "1984" in 1949, just after WWII; it was his warning about the future and the rise of the totalitarian state. This adaptation by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan loses none of the shock value of the original. The book was an uncomfortably disturbing piece of literature and this production takes the audience out of their comfort zone and disturbs.

Icke and Macmillan are co-directors of the piece which has been performed in the UK. They have concentrated on staying true to the original and trying to recreate the disorientation that the book delivers. The set helps to project the dreamlike quality that is necessary to unsettle the audience.

Designed by Chloe Lamford with lighting design by Natasha Chivers, sound design by Tom Gibbons and video design by Tim Reid, the combination gives us the world Orwell prophesied.

With Newspeak, and Doublethink Orwell's world, controlled by The Party and overlooked by the Thought Police, removed all personal freedom and shades of it can be seen today in many states run by fear and oppression. Some would say we are showing signs of it ourselves.

The cast were very good, Tom Conroy who played the complex main character, Winston, was strong and Paul Blackwell as Parsons gave his usual engaging performance. As Winston's love interest, Julia, Ursula Mills developed her character well. Terence Crawford was O'Brien the hard party man with a benevolent demeanor. Renato Musolino (Martin), Guy O'Grady (Syme), Yalin Ozucelik (Charrington) and Fiona Press (Mrs Parsons) were all completely engaged in this depressing world.

Great set and technical involvement, wonderful performances all true to the text, disturbing and depressing, but it still serves as a warning. The usual high standard we have come to expect from our State Theatre Company – but be warned, it doesn't end well.