



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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CRY GOD FOR HARRY

Independent Theatre

Space Theatre

Until 12 August

Review by Maggie Wood

It is a truth universally acknowledged that teenagers and young people will never listen to their parents.

This is the dilemma of King Henry IV. His son and heir Harry should be doing his kingly apprenticeship, but instead prefers to drink, rob and whore around the local taverns with his no-good friends, including one Sir John Falstaff. Falstaff is old enough to know better, and he thinks he does, but will he get the reward he believes is his due once Harry becomes King?

Independent Theatre's Rob Croser has adapted parts of "Richard II", "Henry IV" (Parts 1&2) and "Henry V" to draw together a timeless and universal tale.

Using Shakespeare's rich language, and with an impressive cast, the story of the young king's rise to the throne and getting of wisdom is told in flashback, with a good dash of clowning, comedy, tragedy and trauma.

Undeniably the star of the piece is David Roach as Sir John Falstaff. It's worth seeing the show for this alone.

However, it doesn't stop there. Adding to this wealth of talent is Will Cox as Prince Harry, with an engaging performance that traces the young man's path from hedonism to the realism of life as king, and Nick Buckland who fares very well in his role as Harry's father King Henry IV, but is, above all, heartbreakingly good when it comes to dealing with his fears of failing to be a good father.

The Tavern crowd are unerringly on point and always interesting, with special mention to Bronwyn Ruciak as Mistress Quickly. Tim Taylor also deserves a mention for his Justice Robert Shallow, a wry understated comedic portrayal that deserves appreciation.

Croser's direction keeps the action moving, with some good modern day touches freeing the story from the chains of simple history.

The setting in The Space theatre is effective and versatile, complemented seamlessly by the lighting and soundscape.

"Cry God for Harry" is an ambitious project. Its one failing is its length at three and a half hours, including a 20 minute interval. There are some scenes which don't seem to be crucial to the plot, and could easily be cut.

However, if you're in it for the long haul you'll find yourself entertained by some of the best performances you'll see on an Adelaide stage this year.