



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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FRANKLY WINEHOUSE

Ashleigh Kreveld

La Bohème

Until 26 Feb 2017

Review by Linda Edwards

Amy Winehouse died in 2011, but as this cabaret show at La Bohème proves, she is far from forgotten, and her legacy continues to influence entertainers of today. The show, created and presented by Ashleigh Kreveld, is a tribute Winehouse would no doubt have loved.

Kreveld has a wonderful voice that lends itself brilliantly to the kind of songs Winehouse wrote and sang, but in developing the show Kreveld has worked on far more than just the voice. She has perfectly captured the accent, mannerisms, clothing, and of course, that beehive hairdo. The dialogue sounds like, and apparently is, a mix of authentic quotes of the singer. It would be easy to believe Kreveld was Winehouse.

The show follows the singer's life from early childhood to her death and beyond. There is not much mention of her mother, but the troubled relationship with her father, which played an important role in her life, is frequently referenced. No story of Amy Winehouse's life would be complete without telling all about the men, including ex-boyfriend Chris Taylor, about whom her first album "Frank" was written, and her ex-husband Blake Fielder-Civil, who introduced her to hard drugs. Her life was plagued by depression and a constant struggle with addiction and the story is told with no holds barred, presenting Winehouse warts and all. Kreveld is also very funny and, like her subject, extremely talented.

Songs included many of those Winehouse wrote as a cathartic act at her most desperate and lonely times, such as "Rehab", "I Heard Love is Blind" and "Back to Black", but also included covers such as her great version of Carole King's classic "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow". Kreveld was ably accompanied on the keyboard by Katia Labozzetta.

Even if you were not a fan of Amy Winehouse (and this reviewer was not), you will leave with a much greater appreciation for her and the real person behind the headlines. You're also likely to thoroughly enjoy the show as it romps lovingly through the highs and lows of the singer's troubled life, her talent (especially for jazz), originality, and her untimely entry into the 27 club through alcohol poisoning.

The intimate and charming space at La Bohème is unfortunately too small for this sell-out show, which has now moved to the more spacious room downstairs, and an extra performance has been added on 26 February to allow more patrons the opportunity to see it. As Kreveld channelling Winehouse might say: "If you mingers want tickets then bloomin' hell geezas, you'd better be quick."

Rating: 4 stars (out of 5)