



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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FRANK FORBES AND THE YAHOO BOY

South Australian Playwrights Theatre

Bakehouse Theatre

Until 2 June

Review by Maggie Wood

"Frank Forbes and the Yahoo Boy" is blowing the cobwebs away from the dark and dusty corners of Adelaide theatre and bringing us delightfully into the modern day.

It's a story told both by and about our modern community, and enlightens us to cultural events in our newer migrants' homelands as well as reflecting on the 'first world problems' that our Australian-born Adelaideans seek to escape.

Frank is retired, and practically lives in his shed in Regent Park. He's divorced, his son left home for the states seven years ago and never got in touch, and his daughter is about to go and live in Canada. She buys him a computer so they can keep in touch but unwittingly opens up the sheltered Frank to the landscape of Nigerian scammers.

Meanwhile in Lagos Ishaku is a would-be movie producer in the fastest growing movie industry in the world. Problem is, he needs some start-up capital.

Brendan Cooney is well suited to his role as Frank – honest, plain speaking and bewildered by his children's unhappiness at their relative comfort and privilege. We are engaged by his story and stoicism but it's this very quality that may be the thing that's built a barrier between him and his kids.

Stephen Tongun is an absolute standout as Ishaku. His performance is electric and endearing.

Kimberley Fox as Frank's daughter Tracy is the common point between characters and the audience, eloquent in her need for both the security of home and the thrills of adventure.

Sheila Ablakwa as Jamilah, the organiser behind the online scammers, or 'Yahoo boys' makes a sound start to her acting career in this, her debut role.

The play is written and directed by local, Matt Hawkins. The action never slows and the 90-minutes-plus-interval whizz by. There is a lot to unpack in this play, with keen observations on everyday Australian life and the privileges we take for granted.

It is so important that communities tell their own stories. It is how we come to know ourselves and who we want to become. "Frank Forbes and the Yahoo Boy" does that by reflecting Adelaide's modern mix, bringing with it the full richness that all migrant waves contribute. I look forward to more from this writer and his company.