



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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DOES IT PLEASE YOU?

Taylor Nobes

RUMPUS

Until 28 Feb 2021

Review by Sarah Westgarth

During Fringe time when our attention is focused the art of performance, it can be worth remembering how often we can feel on show in our daily lives, subject to the scrutiny and critique of others. And for those of us who are all too conscious of the way we are viewed, and struggle with the notion of being 'good enough', this can be exhausting. 'Does It Please You?' places this idea in the spotlight, using dance, drama and music to explore the experience of living with a heightened sense of anxiety, trauma, or another affliction that may make it harder to navigate the world and find your place in it. It is a captivating, hilarious, and deeply moving piece of theatre.

Created by Taylor Nobes, who also features in the production alongside an absolutely stellar supporting cast, 'Does It Please You?' is a collection of choreographed pieces, original songs, and dramatic or comedic vignettes that deal with the varied yet universal feelings that come with being treated as though you are less than you should be. These feelings may come from others or, more cruelly, may come from inside our own minds. Each piece has clearly been borne from personal reflection, yet manages to act like a mirror for the audience to see themselves reflected in, and interpret in a way that is individually meaningful. The show refrains from overly emphasising their message; rather, they let the emotions and empathy they create speak for themselves.

The ensemble gathered here is nothing short of spectacular. While Nobes is the key figure, Sam Lau, Kate Burgess and Hanna Instrell-Walker all get a moment to shine. Burgess and Instrell-Walker also act as choreographers, and the dancing is truly something to behold. Witty and satirical one moment, stirring and poignant the next, their movement is fuelled by passion and never fails to captivate. The original songs, written by Nobes, are charming, and elevated by her phenomenal voice. Lau also provides musical accompaniment, demonstrating what a multi-talented group this is. At the centre of it all is Nobes, whose stage presence is consistently electric. While there are challenging themes being explored here, her use of humour and energy is weaponised into a defiant war-cry against anyone or anything that makes you doubt your worth. I want the 'Girls in the Hood' dance number on call whenever I need a boost of self-esteem.

It is always an exciting thing to see a group of young performers and marvel at all the incredible work they are going to make in the future. The talent on display here is extraordinary, and it is a joy, as well as deeply moving, to watch it be used to share such a powerful message. I only wish the show were longer, and if the goal is to leave your audience wanting more, 'Does It Please You?' definitely succeeds. I want more from Taylor Nobes, and the entire cast. May they continue to break the mould.

Rating: 4 stars (out of 5)