



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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THE LARAMIE PROJECT

Red Phoenix Theatre

Holden Street Theatres

Until 30 October 2021

Review by Fran Edwards

This play has a history which defines what it is. Moises Kaufman of Tectonic Theatre Project asked questions about an incident that occurred in Laramie and wondered if theatre could make a statement that added to the dialogue on current events. By questioning the people of Laramie and visiting the area, a group of Tectonic Theatre members gathered the information and quotes that would form the basis of this production. The outcome is an amazing, confronting, poignant and engaging piece of theatre.

Red Phoenix has a reputation for taking on the difficult subjects and they have done this exceptional piece justice with the dedicated cast, led by director Brant Eustice, producing theatre to make us ponder. The cast universally play multiple characters, switching from one to another seamlessly with excellent characterisations and convincing accents. Each of the ten cast members play between six and thirteen characters, ranging from neighbours to the accused, including priests, officials and family members.

In a cast of uniformly good actors it is difficult and perhaps unfair to single out any performances but a couple did stand out to me. Among his other personas, Tom Tassone's transformation from Accused Murderer to Judge was thought provoking. Samuel Creighton's many characters and various accents were impressively handled and Sharon Malujlo gave many good cameos but really shone as the mother of the police officer. Matt Houston went from playing Moises Kaufman to a police officer, a church leader, a juror and many more - impressive. Of course, the same can be said of Anita Zamberlan Canala, Chris Gun, Jasmine Leech, Nadia Talotta, Nick Kennett and Cheryl Douglas; it was a standout cast.

The set was functional boxes except for a few chairs and the ever-present fence at the back, coupled with Richard Parkhill's well-suited lighting it allowed the story to flow. Eustice, assisted by Tracey Walker, has enabled this cast to bring all the needed depth to this piece.

If you are a theatre lover and you don't have your ticket yet, you will need to be quick, you don't want to miss this one!