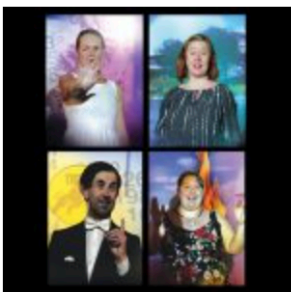


I FORGOT TO REMEMBER TO FORGET

by Steve Davis | Jul 4, 2019



I FORGOT TO REMEMBER TO FORGET



THINGS WE LOVED

- Truth delivered with reflection and emotion
- A memorable show
- A privilege to experience

THINGS WE'D CHANGE

- The show finished poignantly but that high was diluted by the post-show q&a. Perhaps that could be rethought

PRODUCTION 9.5/10



PERFORMANCE 9.5/10



UNTIL JULY 6, 2019

Director Alirio Zavarce calls this “documentary theatre” but rarely is a documentary imbued with profound, emotive triggers like those in *I Forgot To Remember To Forget*.

This collaborative work by the players of **No Strings Attached Theatre Of Disability** begins with a masterful acknowledgement of country, woven into the *I Forgot To Remember To Forget* theme, and then Alirio offers an invitation to us to forge a memory during the performance; for us to be present with the cast and with fellow audience members as something worth remembering is created.

During the opening scene, the cast hypnotically and poetically draws us deeper into the theme of memory and forgetting, reminding us where we are, what we have come to experience, and how actors and audience are as one at this moment in time in this place.

This is reinforced through some clever wordplay before we enter a series of individual, autobiographical stories (or rememberings), as each cast member reflects upon and performs what the show’s theme means to them. There are stories of mundane forgetfulness, of love and change, and even one that uncovers the benefits of a house fire.

And it is in this part of the show where two lessons arise, especially for those of us who are parents.

Firstly, most of our most important memories involve moments with our parents. While this might not be surprising to the more centred among us, for parents clinging on for dear life amid stretched demands of work and school and life, this reminder is a salutary one. There were few dry eyes in the house as we were drawn into a child’s eye view of a mother or father. We must be more present, is the lingering echo of this production.

Secondly, we must respect photo albums. Whether such albums are digital or hard copy, the power of photos from our past to trigger memories was portrayed in various ways during this production. From a swipe-able smartboard setting to interplay with blank frames intercepting larger projections to highlight small parts of photos, the lighting and set design was a clever enabler of storytelling, never a tech sideshow for its own sake.

Not all of the dialogue was lyrical, in fact, much was direct, unaffected language, and that is partly how this production creeps under your skin and into your heart and mind.

The other reason this show is so important to see, is that it is a privilege to engage with people with disabilities taking to the stage, standing in the spotlight, and commanding (and earning) attention from an audience. This really is a showcase in the range of differences of ability we all share and it is testament to how important the work of No Strings Attached is. We would be much impoverished not to have been able to hear these voices and experience this production.

The members of the cast all rose to the occasion, Michaela Cantwell (her first time back at the Festival Centre since suffering a stroke), Kathryn Hall, Kym Mackenzie, Duncan Luke, and Cassie Litchfield. And Alirio’s blending of the autobiographies into a coherent whole will ensure this production is praised and toured for much longer.

Come, process this show through your working memory, and share an experience with fellow audience members as your eyes adjust to the low light, your heartbeats synchronise, and you forget to remember to forget.

Footnote: My first life change after this show has been to talk to my daughters about how we can spend more time together. Not to make memories for their own sake but to live life together for love’s sake.