
ArtSpoken & Reviews

The Woman in Black will chill the spine

Jennifer de Klerk

11/30/2009 09:26:19

Jennifer de Klerk: Small wonder The Woman in Black has been around for so long - it is a frightening and powerful theatrical experience.

It is based on the horror novel by Susan Hill, published in 1983, and was first produced as a stage play in 1989. It is still running in London's West End.

Of course, any play is only as good as those who interpret it and there are no issues here. Eckard Rabe and Anton Luitingh are supported by clever direction and spot-on sound and lighting.

Together they create an eerie scenario of strangely beautiful shimmering sea flats, a gaunt old house, a stark cemetery, billowing sea mists, a town crippled by fear and the bitter malevolence of a wasted woman in black.

All this is done by subtle effects and excellent acting that chivvies the imagination - sometimes too vividly - into supplying the rest of the picture.

Eckard Rabe is the aging solicitor, Arthur Kipps, who seeks to put his demons to rest by telling his story. He enlists the aid of a young actor, who uses his theatrical skills, a play within a play, to bring the tale alive for the potential audience - rather too effectively.

As the actor, Luitingh is boyish and enthusiastic, with the bumbling charm of a rather large puppy. He brings much the same qualities to his portrayal of the young Kipps, a conscientious young clerk completely out of his depth in the dark waters he has to traverse.

We watch him develop as he plunges from disbelief, challenging his fear, into the mind-shaking depths of sheer terror.

Rabe plays a number of parts, each equally effective - the tongue-tied elderly Kipps, the terrified village clerk, the pragmatic old-job man, the sullen barman, the reassuringly strong district landlord.

Gradually the story unfolds, bit by bit, a mind-blowing haunting on the salt flats, macabre sightings in the graveyard, an empty chair rocking in a hidden room ... finally the last piece drops into place to reveal the horrific truth.

The final moment is even more spine-chilling than what went before.

This is a memorable experience, where the power of theatrical story-telling is used effectively to evoke mind, spirit and imagination.

You may not scream, but you'll certainly shiver.

The Woman in Black, directed by Moira Blumenthal, with Anton Luitingh and Eckard Rabe, is on at Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre until January 10.

Jennifer de Klerk is editor of [Artslink.co.za](http://www.artslink.co.za)

Web site: <http://www.montecasinotheatre.co.za>

Related Venue:

[Montecasino Complex](#), Fourways Johannesburg Gauteng South Africa

[Like](#) [Share](#) One person likes this. Be the first of your friends.

Comments

AROUND THE WEB

WHAT'S THIS?

The People's Chemist

VIDEO: Chemist Shows How To Avoid Blood Clots And Lower Blood Pressure

The Fiscal Times

7 Brazen Breastaurants in the U.S. in 2014

Stack

5 Ways to Stay Young and Fit

Cliffside Malibu

Dangers of Sleeping Pills

ALSO ON ARTSLINK

R3,4 million buys you 'Love' 1 comment

Reinstate the Generations 16! 1 comment

Secular sounds in a sacred space 1 comment

Awesome women see 'A Hundred Foot Journey' 1 comment

0 Comments

artslink

Login

Sort by Best

Share Favorite



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site

Privacy

[blog comments powered by Disqus](#)

[Previous](#)

© Artslink.co.za 1997 - 2014. All Rights Reserved | Design, Development & CMS by [FGX Studios](#)