

REVIEW: ELLYN DANIELS – EMOTIONAL TERRORISM, FRINGE 2017

Posted by Darren Gibson | 19 August 2017 |
Reviews, Theatre | 0



RATING 95%

As the young woman sits centre-stage on a fold-out chair, legs arched behind her ears, screaming sexual eulogies in Spanish whilst a crowd of almost eleven people watch on with

gaping eyes, I can't help but wonder how the next sixty minutes will pan out. Moving to her knees in front of the chair and calling to the crowd, she pulls us in further: "This is me licking this guy's asshole, because he asked."

Well, we're gripped from here as Ellyn Daniels takes us on the emotional, sorrowful and moving tale of her ballet upbringing in Orlando to despairing modelling adventures in Paris, Togo, Tokyo and New York and subsequent acting failures in Los Angeles – adventures interspersed with rampant alcoholism, rejection, romance, heartbreak and the constant threat of STD's.

It's a brave thing, standing on stage alone telling a group of strangers demanding enjoyment about your rather illustrious past. It's a subject that many performers and comedians fail to execute correctly; jokes concerning half-drunk booze cups ripe with Aids in Togo bars combined with the uncomfortable looming shadow of genital herpes could so easily fall on deaf ears.

However, Daniels shows such energy, such passion and such ability to conjure up those memories and all the emotion that went along with them that it's utterly gripping from start to finish; an intoxicating, passionate rollercoaster that should leave anyone with half a heart and a kindred sense of "I CAN BE BETTER THAN THIS" heading home with a smile on their face.

An act certainly not lacking in heart, the final dramatic piece (a childhood flashback conveyed with piano accompaniment) has me hugging the wall of The Caves, dewey-eyed and

entranced. If you're expecting a considerable amount of laughs then prepare to be disappointed. The brief jokes, upon which Daniels occasionally stumbles, are used only to weave the story together rather than as big old-fashioned punchlines. Don't let this meagre setback discourage you from heading along though, as these minor imperfections are merely white noise in a heartbreaking act of storytelling.

Emotional Terrorism is a fantastically heartrending account of one woman's struggle to be noticed and an act that deserves a far bigger crowd than a mere eleven people that just happened to be wandering down Cowgate on a Tuesday night. See it, you won't regret the hour spent.

Worth going?

Absolutely

Ellyn Daniels: *Emotional Terrorism* runs until 26th August at the Just the Tonic at The Caves, 21:00.

REVIEW

95%

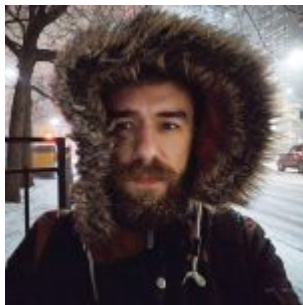
SUMMARY: A fantastically heartrending account of one woman's struggle

to be noticed,
Emotional
Terrorism is a
must see. Ellyn
Davis' energy,
passion and ability
enable her to pull
off tricky material
that many lesser
performers could
not.

RATING

95%

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Darren Gibson

Darren enjoys cliffhangers, baseball, the movie theatre on weekdays, conversations on nihilism and long walks into the lake. Originally from Glasgow, now living in Toronto.