

I Made an Adult



Conceived and performed by Tracy Crisp. Adelaide Fringe Festival 2021, Main Stage at Bakehouse, Feb 22 – Mar 6, 2021

It is midnight. Well doesn't every Mum only have that time available to make a cake? Not just any cake, however; this is the final Women's Weekly Birthday Cake, lovingly made by Tracy Crisp for her youngest son's 18th birthday. As she stirs, she turns the pages of her memories back to the start of her journey as a mother. The fourth in a quartet of plays, this 50 minute gem is a warm, loving and beautifully drawn story.

A small, welcoming and homely kitchen is placed on the stark Bakehouse Mainstage. Stephen Dean's thoughtful, simple and well executed sound, lighting and image design supports Crisp, who steps in and out of discrete spotlights, taking the audience to different times and places. The use of well chosen, sometimes poignant photos, enriches and illuminates the polished, often very moving, or at times, very funny, dialogue.

Thoughtfully directed by Maggie Wood, and conceived and performed by Crisp, you could be forgiven for assuming that Crisp is a full-time actor. Her delivery is nuanced, fluent and seamless. Garbed in a simple, 50s style dress, she moves fluidly around the minimalist set, sharing events in her motherhood journey. Her command of words is genius. She shares the most apt stories. A number of them would make fabulous 'blackmail tales' later in her sons' lives. I was equally deeply moved by her perceptiveness as she described watching her teenage son, who was driving her to distraction, as he slept, musing on his vulnerability, fragility, and the sheer beauty of him at that age.

Despite initially eschewing motherhood, Crisp embraced, with gusto and endless positivity, being the mother of two often boisterous, exuberant and irrepressible, not to mention curious sons. She knows children and their often crazy stages of development and curiosity. She describes both joy and fear lovingly and her personal stories are wonderful. One of my favourites, of course, involved a toilet!

This is a 'must see' show for anyone who has, wants, or has had children. It is also a wonderful piece of theatre delivered by a very talented author, mother, wife and performer. I think she should write a fifth play for this series!

Jude Hines