

Peggy Pickit a potent reference to the failure of medical intervention

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Ewart Shaw, The Advertiser



A reunion dinner leads to reminiscence, recrimination and reconciliation, in this apparently simple and neatly directed play.

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Carol and Martin, Krystal Brock and Brendan Cooney, are home after six years as medical workers in an unnamed African country, though Nigeria is later referenced.

Frank and Liz, David Hirst and Lucy Markiewicz, are a settled middle class marriage.

Things fall apart when it becomes clear that Frank and Liz have been sending financial support to a little girl called Annie, and Carol and Martin have apparently abandoned her.



As they tell of the life they led in the field it becomes clear that they can't have, couldn't have saved her, or anyone.

Prolific German playwright Roland Schimmelpfennig, translated by David Tushingham, challenges the actors, with moments of direct address to the audience, and repeats of significant information, as they are lit by Stephen Dean's busy lighting plot.

Brendan Cooney and Lucy Markiewicz as Frank and Liz in Peggy Pickit Sees the Face of God. Picture: Michael Errey

The cast are almost faultless in this.

Cooney underplays the drunkenness and Hirst has an expressive and mobile face.

Markiewicz and Brock are equally engaging, leading the emotional charge of the play.

Director Hartog's choice of the original *Hair* cast album for the final minutes is inspired.

All those hippie dreams of love and peace faded before the realities of human frailty.

Peggy Pickit, by the way, is a small doll and the unlikely trigger for savage revelations.

Schimmelpfennig gives one significant clue to the deeper meaning of the play.

Martin has a wound that just will not heal.

It's a poignant and potent reference to the failure of medical intervention in the problems of the world.

German audiences would have immediately thought of Wagner's opera *Parsifal*.

Peggy Pickit Sees the Face of God

Joh Hartog Productions

Bakehouse Theatre until June 15