

THEATRE REVIEW: LINES – Theatre Republic



On Friday, October 26, The Bakehouse Theatre was packed to the brim for not only the Australian Premiere of Pamela Carter's *LINES*, but also to celebrate the play being the debut production for Theatre Republic.

Directed by Corey McMahon, *LINES* is a politically charged feat covering many themes including masculinity, identity, power, class and identity and is set largely in the bunk room of four diverse young Australian Army recruits. It's a fly-on-the-wall look at the bravado displayed by men preparing for war, juxtaposed with the inner thoughts and feelings not shared with their comrades.

As the gruelling training and conditioning increases, so too do the secrets the men are keeping from each other and the conflict they are struggling with inside.

All four men are acted superbly, each bringing their own unique perspective to the Army experience. James Smith's Perk is a rough-talking outsider who struggles to keep up with the regimented structure of life in the barracks, Rashidi Edward plays the calming yet conservative patriot Valentine, Stuart Fong as the easy-going larrikin who loves his mum and likes to go out and get wasted and laid, and Matt Crook as Locke, the target of Perk's bullying who initially doesn't give much away about his personal life.

As *LINES* is set in modern-day Australia, I couldn't help but relate these characters to people I knew in real life. Friends, brothers, partners, sons. It's not often that I stop and take pause on the sacrifice these people make daily to serve our country. These young men are essentially conditioned to kill people and no matter how tough you are, that must come with a bit of emotional trauma.

Theatre Republic was borne out of a desire to tell stories that are part of our current conversation. In today's ever-changing cultural and political climate stories like *LINES* are vital as they provide insight into topics that can get shunned to the back-burner for fear of being too confrontational. It was refreshing to see this challenging production staged and performed so unapologetically and I look forward to seeing what comes next for the new theatre company.

5 stars

LINES is showing at Bakehouse Theatre until November 10. [Get your tickets HERE.](#)