

ALTAR EGO

Review from Aussietheatre.com

By Stephen House.

"I cringed a little when Alter Ego began; the wedding dance and accompanying matrimonial images, corny and much too long. (Maybe that was the intention!) But I forgot all that quite quickly when the real action got underway.

Written by James Lyon this play and production direct from the USA is a series of tight, well written monologues that actors, Jimmy Lyons and Melanie Lyons very capably present.

Marriage, sex and monogamy (or non-monogamy) is the order of the night, put forward with a cynical, slightly twisted and at times very funny edge; marriage as an institution pretty well panned by the end of the show.

With some facts included about the failure rates of marriage early on, the show presents a succession of couples each speaking to us directly and separately about their own mainly sad and frustrated sexual situations that "until death do us part" has got them into.

There is the selfish chauvinist husband who has decided that cheating keeps everyone happy and the wife who gets a sexually transmitted disease as a result. There is the gal who cheats with her ex just before her wedding, and the bloke who has lost fifty-five kilos but is still utterly destroyed by his past obesity body image. Most of the stories are fascinating and ring true, and we want to know what happens next.

The two accomplished actors don't miss a beat. With the direct address form nailed, they play around with breaking down the fourth wall and connect with us entirely.

Two pieces are outstanding: A man, who suffers the humiliation of a micro sized penis and finally snaps, and an English wife who lives with a compulsive porn addict and liar who never opens his eyes during sex with her.

While this show works at throwing out some shocks and making light of modern marriage, it also asks some serious questions. One being – is monogamy and ongoing sexual satisfaction with that chosen other one really a bit of an unachievable fantasy in itself?"