

Theatre Review: Small Gods



Timothy Tedmanson as Brutha
Photo courtesy of Michael Errey

Presented by **Unseen Theatre Company**

Reviewed 20 May 2015

The late and great Sir Terry Pratchett left behind a wonderful legacy with his novels, most notably the Discworld series of books.

Unseen Theatre Company's Pamela Munt has honoured Pratchett with, perhaps, her best adaptation to date of one of his works. She has taken one of his earlier, darker and more satirical works, **Small Gods** and done wonders, both in the adaptation and direction of it.

The Great God Om, has manifested herself (no sexism here) as a turtle – she was trying for a white bull. Novice Brutha is the only person who can hear the voice of the Great God (sound familiar?), and this disturbs the opposing faction, led by Deacon Vorbis – dressed to expect the Spanish Inquisition – greatly.

Pratchett stage adaptations can ramble and become mega-confusing (even if one is a fan), but Munt keeps this version short, sweet and moving along at a nice pace; still keeping that marvellous Pratchettian philosophy intact: such statements as “We only get the Gods we deserve” and “There is no Justice – Just Us” eliciting murmurs of agreement from the audience the night reviewed. Munt's versions of the Discworld stories just keep getting more theatrical with each outing and this one is certainly helped by Stephen Dean's lighting and sound design (the burning of the Library is breathtaking), with Michelle Whichello's mixture of cultural and religious costumes making for a wondrous parade of colour and style.

Performances from all the cast are good, with no-one being out of place. Philip Lineton is his usual energetic, lithe self as Lu-Tze the History Monk and philosopher Zeno; Tony Power impresses and disguises himself very well as Brother Nhumrod and Sargeant Simony; Harold Roberts does a great job being an Aussie accented Grecian philosopher, Didactylos; and Adeodatus McCormack makes evil-doing seem so natural as Vorbis.

As The Great God Om, Alycia Rabig seemed to be a little shrill at the start, but grew on one (like all good gods) as the evening progressed. Young Timothy Tedmanson stands out as Novice Brutha, giving a wonderful performance of high quality. He has some great moments of innocence and frustration that never go beyond believability.

One does not have to know about the Disc or Round worlds to enjoy this very entertaining, and slightly thoughtful, piece. Just remember: The Turtle Moves!

Reviewed by **Brian Godfrey – Glam Adelaide**