

## **THE PUNTER'S SIREN**

### **Bakehouse Theatre**

Until 14 Mar 2020

Review by [Lance Jones](#)

The Adelaide Fringe is a truly wonderful thing, as it attracts the very best performances from all over to come and perform in cute little venues and entertain us up close and personal. That's exactly what "The Punter's Siren" is; a self-described "stream of consciousness" that is "anxious, sweaty and comic", performed in the cosy confines of The Studio at The Bakehouse Theatre. This wonderfully hectic performance is delivered in the form of a 55-minute monologue superbly presented by the rubber faced Jacqui Robson and her partner-in-sound Gina Schien, who is also the writer of the play.

The experience starts as soon as one walks in the door with Jacqui grinning from ear to ear, awaiting onstage, expectant and socially embracing – like the perfect hostess wanting to sell you something on a party-plan. To her left is a silent enigmatic figure surrounded by strange props we later discover are for making poignant noises. The intro music stops, the lights change and then we begin the journey.

Jacqui Robson is wonderful in her role of "The Punter", taking aim at her inner demons trying to advise her how to live her life. Fortunately for the observer they are ignored and the monologue sallies forth with the perfect sound effects for each setting. Jacqui is the maestro of characterisation, performing her versions of each persona seamlessly, at times even managing a chase scene with credibility that has you believing there really is someone after her. Her conversations between her nervous, slightly bogan "self" and the smooth sophisticated siren are nicely delivered. Yet it's the facial expressions that carry the show. One could get almost as much out of the action if it was just a spotlight with only her face visible to the audience.

Meanwhile, Gina Schien sits to the side making various noises with an array of accoutrement that add comic depth to the world of crazy happening just a metre away. Reminiscent of the old radio plays of yore, Gina uses coconut shells, whistles, small drums and a host of other indescribable hodgepodge to get the desired effects. All this accompanied by the well-executed lighting of Stephen Dean makes the show pump along with enough changes in texture to join the story together well.

Jacqui engages you from her very first word and delivers Gina's dialogue in an enthralling and at times endearing manner. Obviously funny, but also providing food for thought as to whom one should trust; the smooth talkers in life or one's inner voices. The journey to the ultimate conclusion is highly enjoyable and worth taking a punt on.

Rating: 5 stars (out of 5)