

The Stone Lion: The Award-Winning Book Brought To Life On Stage at Bakehouse Theatre

– Adelaide Fringe Review – The Clothesline



Bakehouse Theatre – Main Stage, Sat 27 Feb

The Stone Lion, the play, is based on an award winning children's book of the same name and comes with songs, puppetry and a couple of young actors who have great pathos. This is a great show, well written and performed, with a positive message (and a great birthday idea, to buy the book, enjoy the reading and remembering seeing the play).

The two actors each played several parts, including puppets – one was a gargoyle (what an interesting idea for a conversational puppet) and *The Stone Lion* himself. There was no doubt who was playing which part at any point, even to the younger members of the audience – which is a great credit to the actors' skills, in and out of character so clearly with minimal costume differences.

The performers began by introducing the book, providing its details and building rapport with the kids. Later there was also a scene requiring volunteers from the audience. The single set was relatively simple, and the costumes were basic but effective. The characters are well written, played and nuanced. The tragedy developed beautifully with all of the audience taken on the journey of this play and the twist well performed.

After the play, questions and answers from the children were primarily about the puppets, which we got to see in operation, front and back; a little extra insight and education in that. The songs were great written by Tim Smith (*The Lion King*) and Luke Hunter (*Jersey Boys*), some with join in actions, and some with sing-along bits.

But the highlight of this all 'round great show was the acting; both actors were stunning, believable, flexible and played to the audience in as professional and polished, yet down to earth manner as you are ever likely to see.

Clayton Werner

The Stone Lion continues at Bakehouse Theatre – Main Stage, at various times, until Sun 13 Mar.