
THE PLEASURE OF THEIR COMPANY

GNG

The Arts Theatre

Until 26 March 2005

Review by Simon Slade

Shaun Micallef and Glynn Nicholas come to Adelaide in a new show. Although new, it does include an array of characters from their past shows.

The ever-smiling and yet somehow scary children's show host, Pate Biscuit returns to continue frightening children of all ages. The even scarier Sergeant Smith is taken to task over his policing methods that have seen complaints against Police on the rise. The almost unintelligible Milo Kerrigan being interviewed!

Shaun Micallef indulges in what he does best – intelligent narrative humour that often creeps up on the audience. One example of this is the English actor Sir Nigel String and his recollections as he prepares in his dressing room. Glynn Nicholas has several mime routines involving unsuspecting members of the audience.

Individually, their distinctive styles shine. Nicholas' mastery of physical humour and Micallef's fascinating facial contortions compliment the sometimes biting writing.

Quite a lot of the show revolves around simple concepts and quite short sketches. An exception is a brilliant, very black comic sketch in which a selfish tax lawyer, played by Shaun, visits his old father, played by Glynn, in a nursing home. The writing here is amongst the finest anyone could wish for. It is a masterful example of sketch writing that showcases Micallef's ability to toy with the emotions of his audience, even in a comic sketch.

The comedy is not only accompanied, but also contributed to, by talented pianist Carrie Barr. She excels in makes her own mark on the evening with a song and dance routine.

Even the sponsors of the show come in for the Micallef treatment. Sponsor messages appear during the show, as a convenient device to mask costume changes and the like. At first they seem innocuous, but listen carefully and they contain some of the most disturbing suggestions about some of Adelaide's favourite businesses!

Micallef and Nicholas both have old links to Adelaide and to each other. Micallef has written for Nicholas before. It is great to see them work together on stage.