



ADELAIDE FRINGE '20 REVIEW: GIRL SHUT YOUR MOUTH

March 13, 2020 · Georgia Brass

One of the exciting things about Adelaide Fringe is that it is often the time where we get premieres of new Australian theatre; **Girl Shut Your Mouth**, written by **Gita Bezard** and presented by Sydney-based company **Theatre Travels**, is a great example of this. **Girl Shut Your Mouth** is set in a dystopian future where girls cannot access education, cannot go out after dark, and if they do, are killed by men for no apparent reason, so frequently that funerals for friends are held every month. The play follows four ordinary young women, **Katie, Grace, Mia and Darcy**, who are living in this extraordinarily violent world, and how they try to leave their past behind for a supposedly better future. It's a play that exaggeratedly examines the everyday experiences of minority groups in society, from women to refugees, and how in the face of threats and acts of violence, these people will try to reclaim their power however they can.

Bezard's script is a very clever and fresh social commentary and the plot itself was pretty good, but the dystopian universe itself could've been given a little more explicit development as to the how's and why's... or perhaps that was the point, for the audience to fill in the blanks themselves and place their own ideas onto the text? **Carly Fisher's** direction was excellent, with a great concept for the production, good pacing in the performance, and undeniably great casting and guiding of the girls. Each of the four actresses, **Kaylee Ashton, Antonia Korn, Sophie Strykowski and Kobi Taylor-Forder**, delivered excellent performances, each creating a strong and distinct sense of their characters between each other and even between the one or two personas they'd change between. A stand-out element of their performance was their synchronisation: in their physical theatre sequences such as the shooting flashback where every floor roll was perfectly timed; in their identical and at times unison performances of male characters (the most eerie being of Walter through megaphones);



On this note, the set was intriguing, made up of a children's play house, a traffic cone, tyres, crates, and a variety of blankets and cushions to show how the girls are caught between being children and adults, and live a life of disarray. Props such as suitcases and backpacks and their contents were used well. Costuming was particularly well done, with each girl wearing a playsuit with a tee underneath, socks and sneakers that often had clashing patterns, colours or styles; this fashion was funky but not too dissimilar from the stylings of today, showing how this dystopian future may not be too far from us. The sound design by **Georgia Condon** was great, with some effects making genuine impact on and drawing in audience, a particularly successful one being the low rumble beneath intense scenes such as the shooting flashback. The lighting design by **Stephen Dean** was stunning, with great use of spots, coloured gels and changes in brightness to depict setting and mood of characters.

Girl Shut Your Mouth is a well-directed, performed and produced piece of theatre, full of funny, frightening and frustrating moments for audiences. It is a strong new Australian play by **Bezard** that has been given a great premiere here in South Australia by **Theatre Travels**, which will make Fringe-goers eager to see what is yet to come from this playwright and company respectively. Check it out – there's only a few days left of the Fringe season!

Rating: 4 out of 5 stars.

Girl Shut Your Mouth is playing at the Mainstage at Bakehouse Theatre until Saturday the 14th of March. For further details and tickets, [click here](#).

Thumbnail image via Adelaide Fringe website.

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