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# Theatre Review: Sex Workers' Opera @ Ovalhouse

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***Sex Workers' Opera*** is a play with no plot. Instead, it is an anthology of tales from around the world and from the cast, many of whom have been sex workers themselves.





*Photo credit: Julio Etchart*

The play deals with a wide variety of topics. Charlotte Rose acts out a scene discussing a visit from social services, Chloe Marshall plays a sex worker and deals with Imogen Flower, her sister who tries to talk her out of sex work.

Through these scenes, the characters are exploring the reasons...  
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*Photo credit: Julio Etchart*

The play deals with a wide variety of topics. Charlotte Rose acts out a scene discussing a visit from social services, Chloe Marshall plays a sex worker and deals with Imogen Flower, her sister who tries to talk her out of sex work.

Through these scenes, the characters are exploring the reasons behind sex work, the stigma, the safety and the everything else in between.

There's also a sex worker with an invisible disability, who has chosen the profession due to the ability to take days off and work on her own hours.

Emy Fem, a transgender German sex worker is part of the cast, as is Jordan Busson - whose bios on social media describe him as a "basic low femme".

Siobhan Knox, director of movement, appears in many scenes and the choreography she's produced is quite stunning. Cast member Chiqui Love appears to defy the laws of gravity as she dances on a pole on a set that is simple and minimal, focusing the audience's attention on the characters.

The line between character and actor is blurred and through the use of recordings, the story makes it abundantly clear that this is real stuff that is happening all around the world.

Through the eyes of the sex workers, the experience delves into government policy and highlights its ridiculousness. It examines the government's attempt to censor [non-conventional sex acts](#) in online pornography.

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In this bite, music director, Alex Etchart, plays a character who interacts with the audience, something which happens many times.

The play discussed the Nordic model, prostitution is decriminalised, but everything else is illegal. The cast takes the audience on an extensive exploration of these issues.

The play is funny. Its humour has added to its colour, the characters have come alive and do all seem, genuinely likable. It doesn't shy away from the big issues, but perhaps it takes on too much, trying to explore too much in a short space of time.

A narrative linking the stories might help focus the stories and the relative inexperience of the cast is obvious, failing to properly freeze and laughing whilst frozen, for example.

The whole story is geared to an important issue, which cannot be forgotten.

Even during the interval, a song *Blissfulness* sent in by the Collective of Sex Workers and Supporters (COSWAS) in Taiwan is playing, translation from Mandarin projected on to the screen onstage. These lyrics hammer home the message more, about safety, livelihood, and happiness.

This is vitally important. Sex work is complicated, men and women go into it for a variety of reasons, but in many nations around the world, laws have made this work riskier, without



actually doing anything to help workers.

Regardless of whether or not you think it's good or bad for this to occur, it does occur and it's better for it to occur in the safest way possible.

This play may have its faults, but what it is attempting to do is noble, and the cast generated a warm, friendly, atmosphere.

Anyone, who wants to explore more about these issues, or anyone who has misconceptions should really come and see this play.

This play is attempting to open eyes to the reality of life for sex workers and encourage better discussion about the laws regarding and perceptions of sex work, I wish them nothing but luck in their mission.

*Sex Workers' Opera runs until Saturday 2nd December. Tickets and more information [here](#).*

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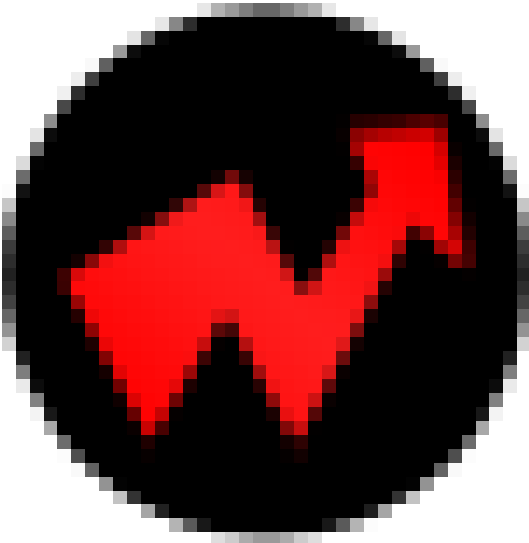
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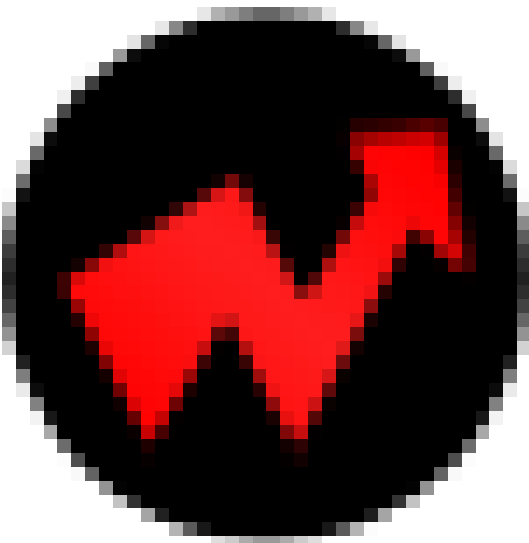


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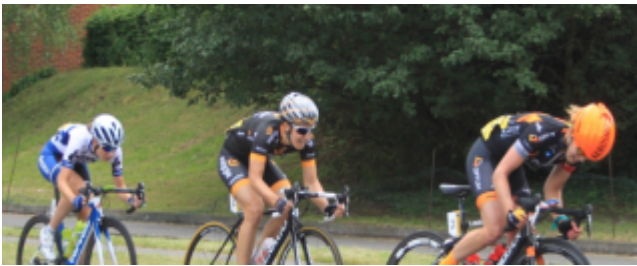
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