

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2015 REVIEW – 12.10.15 *****



Edi Martin, captive Syrian war reporter, twenty-nine weeks in a filthy cell, succumbs to near self-induced schizophrenic hysteria. She has seventy minutes, or maybe seconds, to deliver an ensemble of inner monologues – expositions to maintain her sanity – possibly her life. The constant vigilance of the ever prowling, sexually predatory guard haunts her with a cancerous aura of impending abuse or death. Like Electra she is defined and consumed by violence she cannot control.

Edi switches constantly from the present to her childhood then assumes the character of precise and prim spoken Edith Cavill, whose nursing vocation took her to Belgium. Arrested by the occupying Germans in 1915 for aiding escaping allied soldiers – refusing to plead for mercy – she was executed by firing squad. Her death became propaganda martyrdom for the War Effort.

‘I have lived my life over and over...Brian Keenan and Terry Waite did years, my twenty-nine weeks is a dawdle!’ The contrived levity as fetid as the ‘sanitary’ bucket she is forced to use. Each morning she takes out a hidden makeshift die. Which ever number she rolls, that will dictate her predefined day’s agenda. Six is special. Six could mean she owns her own death using a crudely fashioned blade – or she might save it for the guard’s next, and last, ritual humiliation.

Her visceral fear and rage is compounded by a sense of shame that she cannot match Cavill’s reported dignity and refusal to condemn her killers. The imploding claustrophobia of her

nightmare is intensified by the pulsating boom of an artillery barrage. A stalking maniac's heartbeat but a street away that could bring her release or death.

Playwright, Clive Holland, director, Mary Swan and the Proteus crew have elicited a mesmeric and profoundly intense performance from actor Mary Rose. In role as Edi/Edith, gravitas, timing, visceral vulnerability and ecstatic rage define her craft. This show deserves to be a number one ticket at this year's Fringe. Not for the faint-hearted there is some strong language and harrowing episodes. The Greeks Tragedians need look to their laurels. The performance programme provides an invaluable source of background contexts for 12.10.15. This is volatile, brain-bayonetting, white-heat drama at its very best. The show your friends will judge your judgement by. See it.

Momentum Venues @ St Stephen's (Venue 166) □ 14:20 Aug 8-17, 19-30 1 hour 15 minutes. Suitability: 16+ (Guideline) Country: United Kingdom – England Group: Proteus Theatre Company Warnings: Contains strong language and adult themes.

An apposite digression might be found at The Scottish Portrait Gallery where there is an exhibition featuring WW2 American photographer, Lee Miller/Picasso. She was with the US forces and photographed the liberation of some of the first discovered concentration camps.

Momentum Venues @ St. Stephen's Centre Box Office: 0131 516 2880 (from August) Venue 166

12.10.15 Momentum Playhouse: Preview Thurs 6 August, 2.20pm

Fri 7 August– Sun 30 August 2015 at 2.20pm. Running time 1 hour 15 mins. (age16+)

Tickets: Weekday £10.00, Weekend £10.00, Concession £8.00, Preview £8.00 (no perfs Tues 18 Aug) www.proteustheatre.com