

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016 REVIEW: All The Things I Lied About*****

☒ All The Things I Lied About.

Katie Bonna

Theatre (comedy, spoken word)

Roundabout @ Summerhall (Venue 26)

[https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/all-the-things-i-lied-ab
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'O, what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive!' Walter Scott

Written and performed by Katie Bonna this perceptive, sometimes viscerally honest, dissection of deceit is part autobiographical, part TED talk and often very funny. Roundabout's spacial dynamic works to particular effect lending a cohesive audience/performer intimacy.

TED is an acronym for a global forum sharing ideas and innovative thinking in Technology, Entertainment and Design. Ms Bonna concedes she is not particularly 'sciency' but by means of some interactive role-play involving her being pelted with plastic balls and super soaked as she assumes the bicameral characters of Jeremy Clarkson/Alan Partridge she successfully demonstrates the psychology behind the insidious consequences of lying.

Eschewing any reveals or spoilers we are drawn into a family trauma that still impacts on her and her family to this day. We share an insight in to how cognitive dissonance, the seeming capacity to hold two diametrically opposite line of

thoughts, when combined with deceit, lying and guilt will manifest itself in any number of malign and corrosive ways.

Sounds intense?

It is, but equally revelatory and ultimately life-affirming. Bonna explores, by use of a Russian doll where each increasing sized piece is shared amongst the audience, how we begin to learn to lie as we move from early childhood to adulthood. We lie for myriad reasons.

'Gaslighting' describes the incremental abusive impact a person can have on another, in many cases where a spouse is having an affair but insists they are not and displaces their guilt and anger on to the other party by convincing them that they are the ones at fault. It is all in their mind. Others will be drawn in to this manipulative charade of mind-games.

Again The Roundabout dynamic comes into its own when Ms. Bonna assumes the role of Donald Trump at a baying rally as he spouts forth his pernicious misogynistic slogans. His denial of his 'War on Women'. Neither polemic or feminist tantrum, this performance is revelatory and uplifting. We just need to become better liars! 'Honesty is a choice, not a habit.'

(She does confess to duping her sister into drinking wee once.) Oscar Wilde's retort to the idiom, 'The pure and simple truth,' was 'The truth is rarely plain and never simple.' A totally top of your Fringe list must see show. Be honest now, you know you want to...

There is a post-show collection outside the gig raising funds for Women's Aid supporting victims of domestic abuse.