

REVIEW – A Taste of Honey

This play from 1958 remains a notably fresh piece of work. Written by the late Salford playwright Shelagh Delaney, *A Taste of Honey* helped redefine perceptions of British working-class life.

Jodie Prenger delivers a knock-out performance as Helen, a brassy, glamorous and pleasure-seeking 40-year-old single mother constantly looking for her next drink.

Much to the frustration of her daughter Josephine (Gemma Dobson) who is spirited away by a young black sailor (Durone Stokes). He sings romantic soul music and unlike her mother is clement and interested. The effective live jazz backing sets an evocative tone throughout the performance.

When Helen embarks on another hopeless affair with Peter (Tom Varey) after Josephine becomes pregnant she shares a flat with Geoffrey (Stuart Thompson).

Despite being Gay, Geoffrey, for a moment at least, considers marriage in his desire to protect and care for Josephine. Aside from the remarkable chemistry between the actors what strikes you is the sense of inclusion.

At the time Delaney was a singular voice for working-class women in theatre and her northern soul and wit continues to shine through 61 years on. In a divisive time such as this, it's good to be reminded of female, black and gay characters that don't fall into the usual class/gender/racial/stereotypes.

This was also apparent in the make-up of the broad audience.

A Taste of Honey, Kings Theatre until 28 September 2019

[Tickets here](#)

