

‘Penthesilea’ at The Lyceum

Every show that the Internationaal Theater Amsterdam brings to the Edinburgh International Festival is unlike any you see elsewhere. Penthesilea is no exception. It is in your face, visually stunning, innovative, shocking, yet extraordinarily engaging.

In this visceral and sexy retelling of the ancient, tragic love story, Achilles and Penthesilea are not war heroes, but rock stars accompanied by apposite, heavy music.

As the Queen of the Amazons, an all-female society of warriors who can only have sex with men they have defeated on the battlefield, Penthesilea falls in love at first sight with Achilles, the Greek army commander during battle in the Trojan War. He, too, falls for her when it is his duty to attend to the matters of war! She vows to defeat him.

The ensuing dialogue, music, and action all leads up to the appalling climax depicted in an astonishingly graphic manner.

By the end, the fact that it is performed in Dutch with the need to read surtitles faded from consciousness as I was swept away with the sheer audacity of the production. Brilliant.

Until 6th <https://www.eif.co.uk/events/penthesilea>

