

Review: Nothing Happens (Twice)

By Sara Lamerton

Nothing Happens (Twice), Theatre Royal Plymouth

Which critically acclaimed play springs to mind when you think of two women with thick spanish accents discussing the meaning of life in thermal underwear, albeit occasionally flamingo outfits or scruffy, tattered suits, and centres around an existential crisis at Stratford shopping centre?

No ideas?

It's obvious when you know.....

Waiting for Godot of course. Duh!

OK, OK, maybe it's not obvious at all. Maybe I'm just teasing you. But *Nothing Happens Twice*, performed and devised by Mercè Ribot and Patricia Rodriguez, directed by Ursula Martinez, really is a unique and heartfelt tribute to one of the most popular and extensively performed plays of the 20th century.

Spotlighting the soul destroying, life questioning experience of lying to children as performing flamingo's six times a day in Stratford shopping centre, the charming and endearing pair that make up Little Soldier Productions - a name they now regret- take us on their own journey to discover renewed meaning and purpose. Struggling to find their passion again they battle bureaucracy, brick walls, each other, and themselves in an attempt to gain permission to perform their own version of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

Just like the famous Beckett quote "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better" Mercè and Patricia walk us through the lowest period of their time together, highlighting the struggles, frustrations, road blocks, and existential angst which ultimately lead them to create this quirky and unexpected show.

It's clear to see the pair have a strong connection, even if at times they're tethered together by a noose around their necks; their dynamic and genuine energy resonates through the tough times. Searching for purpose beyond typecast and stereotyped roles, hilariously but tragically highlighted by the range of escorts and prostitutes Mercè has played, Little Soldier Productions was born eventually bringing them to a place where *Nothing Happens Twice* could rise like a phoenix from the ashes of those fated flamingos.

Nothing Happens Twice is genuine, funny and relatable. An email exchange with 'Georgie' being one of the highlights for me, as well clever interjections with interview snippets, alongside real life video clips from their time together, and a unique take on

an 'interval'. All of which keep the show's flow fresh, fast paced, and dynamic.

Using a large dose of humour to mock themselves and each other certainly warms the audience quickly. As does their inspiring resolve and determination to work around life's obstacles in the pursuit of following their creative dreams.

The pair end the hour by asking the audience to spread the word, encouraging people to come and support their show. And, after all their hard work and dogged determination, I sincerely hope they continue pursuing a creative journey together making more unique theatre for us to enjoy along the way.

Nothing Happens Twice is showing in The Drum until Saturday 30th April.