

Elizabeth Semmel's review of Life x 3

I wasn't sure what to expect when attending **Life x3** (Trois Versions De La Vie), I do not speak nor understand French yet was looking forward to the prospect of seeing innovative theatre with surtitles. Despite a technical glitch when the writing didn't match the dialogue this was effective. Generally I could read ahead and then watch the delivery - a unique experience knowing what was coming before watching and listening to the delivery. My guest does speak French and did not observe the surtitles, I believe we enjoyed the piece equally.

Life x 3 is three versions of the one unique 'dinner party'. I am not sure however each scene was different enough to warrant seeing it three times over. There were subtle changes yet I was hoping for vastly different outcomes due to the difference in attitude in the characters in each scene. Maybe I did miss something in the translation, yet my bi-lingual guest agreed that it was all too similar.

Produced by **Melbourne French Theatre Inc. (MFT)** in what is their 100th production, this show is set in a very intimate space, one small room in a house. Sitting in the front row I literally bumped the actors as they came down stage. This is a white room with white furnishings and even white books and fruit. I am not sure of the significance of the white, but it looked striking, quite effective. Four actors play the lead roles, with a fifth voice from an off stage bedroom. The two main characters Swiss born **Ruy Bucholz** and **Charlotte Grasset** displayed terrific energy throughout. Particularly **Bucholz** who was quite distinct in his emotions in the three different scenes.

For those interested in the French language or theatre with a difference supporting **MFT** makes for a fun night out with delicious wine and cheese part of the ticket cost.

Performance Season: Until September 10

Venue: La Maison de Maitre Theatre, 203-205 Canning St., Carlton (Corner Neill St.)

Book online www.mftinc.org or 9349 2250