

British Theatre Guide

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Retrained

In Bed With My Brother

Newcastle Fringe Festival and Alphabetti

Alphabetti Theatre, Newcastle

5 August 2021

Wow! Er... Well... Yes. I... Erm.... Oh yeah... Wow!

There were supposed to be three of them—Dora, Nora and Kat—but there were only two, Kat and one of the others, but it wasn't clear (to me, at any rate) which of the others it was, Dora or Nora, nor why the missing one was (missing, I mean). Anyway, the two who were there—whoever they were—wore England football shirts (the blue one, not the white).

It's a performance about retraining (because your next job could be in cyber—the government said so, so it must be true), so what did we learn? Well, first of all, that Andrew Lloyd Webber said, "Don't forget, I'm a massive bastard." Although I'm not sure that he actually did. They did, though.

They have done what the government said and have retrained. Kat has become a lip model (pursue your dreams!) and they're both now fully qualified hairdressers because they've got all the chat.

And did you know that by 2028 all jobs in theatre will be filled by robots—including the audience? We actually got to meet Laurence Olivierbot!

Accompanied by very loud music and strobe lighting, they did a dance routine that made pogoing punks look like classical ballet. They drank a lot of Carling and one of them was sick in a bucket. I will, however, draw a veil over what happened to that sick and that bucket...

There was a violent scene. Well, there had to be because the intro warned us there'd be strobe lighting, scenes of violence, nudity and other stuff, such as audience participation. And there was. And they stood up for the right of a woman to rub hand sanitiser into her naked tits if she wants too. Freedom!

Does this all seem mad, chaotic, even anarchic? Well, that's because it is. Makes "Anarchy in the UK" seem pretty tame really. But it was great!

And a very appropriate response to the UK as it is now.

I saw the online version (it was being streamed live), sitting in front of my computer, brightening up an area which is normally reserved for work, but here was a case of the live show being definitely much, much better, with them getting right in yer face with the audience. And yes, the audience seemed to love it.

This is what Fringe theatre is meant to do. Kudos to the Newcastle Fringe and Alphabetti for bringing it to the North East. At one time we would have had to go to Edinburgh to see this.

Reviewer: [Peter Lathan](#)