DaDaFest International 2014: You Are My Sunshine: Terry Galloway

November 2014

You Are My Sunshine is Terry Galloway’s comic exploration of what happens to a woman after she literally regains her senses. Cate Jacobs reviews a performance at the Bluecoat on 27 November

Galloway explodes onto the stage in cacophony of sound reminiscent of a wedding car towing a line of tin cans down a cobbled street! Removing two ankle bracelets of empty cans she announces: “I love sound! I hate silence… now that I
don’t have to put up with it. There is a kind of peace in silence; an uneasy peace.”
She was born hearing but gradually lost her hearing as a consequence of prenatal damage caused by antibiotics given to her mother during pregnancy. After years of resistance she recently had a cochlear implant operation and she takes us on a hilarious, poignant and often heart-breaking ride of her experiences from the moment of her birth, through all the twists and turns of growing up and growing into the remarkable woman who stands before us. And she is remarkable – many of her stories, although told with side-aching humour, are born out of deep pain and struggle in a world that is less than accommodating of difference. Instead of living down to the low expectations that the education system and society had of her because of her deafness and the prejudice perceptions of what that meant, she turned those experiences into opportunities to be the very best she can be, emerging as an influential activist and role model through her work within the theatre as writer, director and performer.
Even though we spend most of the performance laughing at the ridiculous realities imposed upon her and others in the deaf community, the humour is underpinned with strong themes of justice and a demand for meaningful equality. Terry has a gift for taking you inside of her experience and showing it to you from within, so that you really do stand in her shoes and see the world from her point of view. It is often an uncomfortable and deeply frustrating perspective. She shows us the procedure a deaf person had to go through to make a simple phone call, all the machinery, technology and language necessary just to try and order a pizza for delivery. We are laughing again, but when she turns around and challenges us to also see how sexy a
mobile phone is, to be able to take it out of your pocket, make a simple call and hang up… I know I’m never going to take that for granted again. Throughout the piece, Terry seems to walk an invisible tightrope, wobbling occasionally, towards the point where she finally decides to have the implant. She describes the moment that she first ‘heard’ as being terrifying; she wanted to rip her own head off it was so intense and then at the very pinnacle of that terror, the achingly pure sound of a bell being struck startled her into a place of awe. Today, all sound is a total joy to her, birds singing, the hum of the fridge, the relentless barking of the dog next door…. her mothers voice, music. But equally she doesn’t forget that ‘some regard implants as a genocide cutting into deaf culture’ and these are thoughts that are discussed in the Q&A.

All in all, **Terry Galloway** has something to say, that is well worth listening to.

[Please click on this link to see the full programme of events lined up for DaDaFest International 2014 in Liverpool](#)