

THE STAGE: Reviews

Woyzeck

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This powerful, atmospheric reworking of Buchner's 200 year old play as a three-hander is set in the aftermath of the First World War with graphic flashbacks and a crisply accurate soundtrack taking us from heartbeats and drips falling in a bucket to rocket fire and fairground music.

Scene Productions, as usual, presents a highly refined form of jerky, balletic, fast, evocative physical theatre with a strong debt to Brecht and some slickly puppeted underpinning.

Mark Rush in the title role is wonderfully compelling - manic, wide-eyed, traumatised and tragic as he tries and fails to deal with delayed shell shock and the infidelity of Marie (Katharine Hurst), mother of his child. Hurst is astonishingly versatile - warm and concerned as a worried mother, delicious as a conning French showman and crisp and cruel as a doctor bent on experiment. Mark Morgan too as the sneering army officer, the self-interested seducer and the sinister white-coated senior doctor, as well as puppeteer, appears to be able to play any role with total conviction.

Nicely timed for the 2014 centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, this Woyzeck is a fine piece of rapid fire theatre which shocks as much as it entertains.

Production information

Canada Water Library, London, October 31, then touring until February 20

Authors: Georg Buchner (adapted by Katharine Hurst, Stuart Walker)

Directors: Kelly Smith, Stuart Walker

Producer: Scene Productions

Cast: Katharine Hurst, Mark Rish, Mark Morgan

Running time: 1hr