

Review: Secret Bridesmaids' Business

Venue: Theatre Royal

Date Friday 27 June 2014

Reviewed by Adrienne Matthews

Secret Bridesmaids' Business was first penned by prodigious Australian playwright and television scriptwriter Elizabeth Coleman in 1999. It has been performed numerous times since and proved to be a hit with audiences. This performance by Nelson Repertory was no exception going by the laughter and applause as the play progressed.

I particularly liked the hotel room stage set. Larisse Hall's vibrant contemporary art along with 1970s headboard and vintage drapery provided the right amount of discord to aptly reflect the storyline.

Emma Schwass is bride to be Meg Bacon. She spends the night before her big day with Matron of Honour, Angela Dixon (played by Molly Martin) and Bridesmaid, Lucy Dean (Jen Amosa). Also in attendance is her overbearing, over organising Mother, Colleen Bacon (Maree Lawson).

Meg receives news that has the potential to change everything. Relationships, loyalty and friendship are suddenly challenged and the play moves from being a simple story about a wedding to a commentary on serious social issues and questions about the right and wrongs of friends speaking out.

There was much to laugh with and some great one liners -"what is it about this one day that turns people into raving lunatics"- along with some sound acting, albeit over melodramatic in places.

The only weak link was the bridegroom James Davis (Ollie Polglase). To be more believable there needed to be fewer clichés in his script and a more convincing delivery.

The cast have to be commended for the huge amount of work that has gone into learning the substantial dialogue. There are a number of challenging soliloquys, all well delivered and which completely engaged the audience.

This was a very entertaining night out in the lovely Theatre Royal with a delicious glass of bubbly and good friends who enjoyed the play as much as I did.