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## Robert Golding - One4Review



one4review | On 23, Aug 2013

\*\*\*\*

Not having seen the play Richard Parker, I have to take this Owen Thomas sequel on its own merits. It begins in a straightforward manner and fully engages as it builds up to a remarkable and chilling conclusion.

Robert (Alastair Sill), who is an investment banker, and his wife Jen (Sara Lloyd-Gregory) are celebrating the completion of the restaurant Jen and Mark, her business partner, are going to manage. This is Robert's first view of the restaurant and he and Jen banter about the décor and Jen's choice of paintings hanging on the wall before Mark arrives. One painting sets off a conversation about ghosts and this is the first indication of unease.

When Mark (Gareth John Bale) arrives, the whole tone takes on a sinister feel. He is an enigma, unwilling to reveal details about his background, and continually questioning Robert and indeed our perceptions of truth to the point it appears obsessional. He postulates, for instance, that Elvis is still alive and that Paul McCartney was killed in a car accident in 1966. He appears to have the circumstantial evidence to back up his conclusions for all manner of conspiracy theories.

When personal revelations about Robert are brought out into the open, it seems Mark is becoming paranoid invoking an age-old battle between the forces of good and evil. Suddenly, when Jen has a complete shift of personality, Mark now does become a credible character. This leads to a totally unpredictable conclusion.

The cast give outstanding performances as they move from light comedy to dark menace. Perhaps, some of the conspiracy theories are over the top, but it is a tough provoking play in terms of the forces at work manipulating the information we are allowed to receive and our consumption of high tech devices.

Reviewed by Ben

Assembly Roxy; 139

1 to 25 August 2013 (not 12)

14.20 - 15.20

Fringe Programme Page Number: 316

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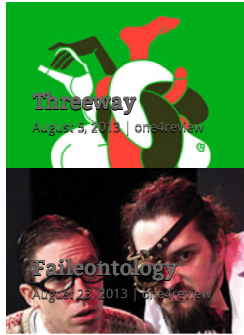
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22nd Aug

Simon Donald - Butch Straight Poof 4 Star \*\*\*\* -

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