

Amber went to watch the Banbury Cross Players 'Love Song' by Abi Morgan at The Mill Arts Centre.

Lovesong by Abi Morgan

Banbury Cross Players at The Mill Arts Centre, Banbury 5-8th July, 7.45pm

An incredibly intense and poignant tale of a relationship over a lifetime with all the joys and frustrations, the harmonious synchronicity and the pain and conflict.

Here we see a young married couple starting out in a new and daring age with often different ideas on what they should be doing yet aiming to be 'living the dream'. Different aspirations and different expectations of their role within the relationship inevitably means the 'dream' gets distorted and the couple encounter many challenges, concessions and compromises along the way. In order to restore the balance, they must constantly recalibrate and maintain the integrity of the relationship.

This will undoubtedly strike a chord with most of us in the audience for some reason or another and can make for uncomfortable viewing at times, but through the extremes of emotion, energy and language, the reward in experiencing the journey with the characters to the very end will be the thing that hits you hardest and will stay with you long after it finishes.

There are so many layers to this that it could be analysed until the end of time, yet somehow Morgan has managed to speak to everyone at any stage of adulthood and display great insight into how the dynamics of how a relationship can change over time.

The minimal yet effective staging gives more than enough visual in order for our own imagination to complete the experience and all senses are engaged here.

The symbolism of birds, with recurring themes of time, ritual and legacy is repeated throughout the play along with the marital bed as a key metaphor for life, death and all the ins and outs of life and love. It offers discussion for spirituality versus science; what we see and what we believe.

The actors from Banbury Cross Players work hard here weaving in dialogue and multi perspective recollections with dream-like dance sequences to enhance the notions of time dilation and relativity and how connected we remain throughout. Clever recurrent visuals such as with costume create a mirror into what the characters are seeing and make us think of how we see ourselves in a timeless manner and this then becomes transcendent.

This play will grab you by the senses, touch your soul and lead you on a dance through time.

Amber Sivyler