

Noda South-East

Dee Sharpe

Another enthralling evening with this accomplished company which as usual had a superb front of house team who generated the welcoming atmosphere and a sense of excited expectancy.

Sarah Casey, a young travel agent from New York who has never left the city, has mysteriously disappeared. She dreams of a better life and hangs out in a bar to get away from her overbearing mother and dim boyfriend. The last people to see her were ex boxer barman Jack and Elston Rupp the peculiar thrift shop worker who dresses in other people's clothes, inhabiting their identities for a while.

The relationships between characters of this play with their flaws and quirks were vital to the plot and I have to say that every actor was exceptional. The audience was well and truly hooked.

Jaqueline Harper's utterly convincing Sarah, fizzed with frustration, restlessness and yearnings for a less mundane life, while Dan Dryer managed to create a sinister, totally creepy yet magnetic Elston Rupp, his weird empathetic logic disturbing yet intriguing screwed up cop Ted Mitchell (masterfully played by John Garland).

Loud, brash Mum Ellen (Susanne Crosby) with her lightning changes of expression from devoted to apathetic was hugely funny and H Reeves gave a touching performance as earnest, bewildered Timothy Creighton.

Other accomplished performances were by Phil Nair-Brown perfectly cast as ex champ bar owner Jack Fallon, Sarah Frost as Elston's boss Natalie juggling pity and revulsion, and Matt Arnold as Sarah's dim, hopeful, but uninspiring boyfriend Anthony.

The play was performed in the round, with minimalist set which suited the character of this sharp, stark, darkly comic play giving a Film Noir feel throughout. The story is told out of sequence, jumping about to give a contemporary atmosphere. Expertly timed and delivered one-liners, irony and sarcasm laced the play with laughs. Each scene like a polished puzzle piece, expertly put in its place to create the plot, the last piece unexpected, yet strangely satisfying; a sense of walking on air, but not in a 'Snowman' like way.

Congratulations to everyone for a perfect, polished, enthralling production of Disappeared.