

## Simon Astill review

Last night I went to Nottingham Playhouse to see Ramps on the Moon's 'Our Country's Good' which is a fully accessible play, it is spoken, signed, captioned and has audio description. I've heard a lot of good things about the production from friends who have been working on the rehearsals and just had to see it for myself, whilst it was a very busy play from a Deaf person's perspective, there was a lot going on, on stage at times, I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it! It's part comedy and part serious with messages that are still valid today.

I was in awe of Caroline Parker, a Deaf actress who I have met a few times and seen her perform previously, she was able to remember such a lot as she was Signing and doing voice over for a number of characters, that says a lot of the person she is taking on such a big responsibility, I couldn't manage half of what she did, there were a few other characters who also signed and did voice over too, but none of them made me feel like I was part of the audience watching a play within a play like Caroline! That woman is a genius!

Another character I loved was the lady who played Duckling, the seriousness of her character was so believable that you couldn't help but feel what she was going through, she had moments where she was funny too but you really had to feel for her.

What I liked most was the way that BSL was used in the play, it is a visual language but the play seemed to add another dimension to the language in how descriptive the language is, this was partly down to the creativity of Paula Garfield, the creative director of Deafinitely Theatre, I've also had the opportunity to meet Paula and her sister Fifi a few times and yes the Deaf community is small hence knowing people (Morgan always thinks it's funny that everywhere we go, I know someone!).

To me, whilst there were a lot of hearing actors on stage, I was drawn to the Deaf actors, not because I am Deaf myself, but because they made the play come alive. I do normally follow the captions when I go to the theatre but I was so engrossed in the descriptive nature of the BSL that I forgot the captions were there!

I can highly recommend the play, which is on in Nottingham until March 24th before going on a 5 theatre tour round the UK. If you get the opportunity, please go and see it, you won't regret it.

Now I need to go and work on my performance skills, I want to be an actor!!!