

Edgar's Girls: Burlesque Based On Poe – Adelaide Fringe Review



La Bohème, Wed Mar 11

This show begins promisingly with an impressive version of Florence And The Machine's *Girl With One Eye*, sung by Morgan Powell. The lyrics of this song, with references to having an eye cut out with a knife, seem perfectly suited to an Edgar Alan Poe story. In fact the music is excellent throughout, my particular favourite a gorgeous version of *Ne Me Quitte Pas* sung by Sarah de Possesse at the piano, although I struggle to see the relevance of this song to the storyline.

The connection to Poe is established by reading extracts from his writings, but this is meant to be done by male actor David Halgren, who is unfortunately not well enough to appear, and so the duty of narrator falls to Morgan. All plaudits to the girls for carrying on – apparently there is a replacement Poe lined up for later shows. In any case the links to Poe's writings are fairly tenuous – this is intended to be a show mainly about the women in his life.

We are told that his mother died when he was very young, and that the role of his guardian fell to the mother of a school friend. The suggestion that she was a little unhinged leads, slightly too quickly, into a burlesque routine requiring an escape from a straight-jacket. From then on it becomes clear that the burlesque is the main point of the show, and the Poe connection merely an excuse, although this may still be an effect of the Poe character being absent.

The burlesque routines vary in quality. A fan dance with black feathers to the music of Antony Hegarty (of Antony & The Johnsons) captures the Gothic aspect of Poe nicely. A jealous fight scene between two of Poe's love interests seems a little understated. On opening night the show feels like a work in progress, but an enjoyable show nevertheless.

Adrian Miller

Edgar's Girls continues at La Bohème until Fri Mar 13.

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