**Petula Review - Isla Williams**

A perfect balance of chaotic comedy, unpredictability and meaningfulness finds itself with the label ‘Petula’. The Riverfront provided an electric atmosphere on the night of the 5th April, the rest of the audience just as excited as I was to re-enter the Theatre world and immerse ourselves into something truly imaginative.

Firstly, I wondered what language the show would choose to present the script in. I soon realised it would be trilingual; the combination of Welsh, English and French was certainly successful. However, I found my eyes focussing on the translation screens in case I was to miss out on any vital dialogue that would hinder my understanding of the plot. This meant I felt like I was missing out on the actors’ performance sometimes.

The actors encapsulated busy family life very well especially as the main character Pwdin’s family was incredibly eccentric. These moments contrasted with the more serious and meaningful messages the show was trying to convey while discovering deeper issues like struggles with body image. I felt that the cultural allusions were perfectly included and the balance of laughs and earnest moments (but mainly laughs) was well executed.

I feel like the main element of this production was its pure dreamlike nature. Anything could happen because it was already so surreal, I feel the actors really took advantage of this and played their roles with such enthusiasm. The ‘filthy cosmic trap beat’ interludes were hilarious and allowed for the actors to travel across the stage stealthily. The transitions were clever and well timed especially considering the ball pits all over the stage.

This show left my mind up to interpret it in a range of ways. Were the people Pwdin met in space really just in his mind? Or, was it all real? Although it was primarily entertaining, it was very thought provoking. It was sometimes hard to understand what was happening especially as the main love storyline was between two cousins which was never acknowledged in the play. Despite this, Dewi Wykes really shows off the character of curious Pwdin and the other actors played a great variety of roles (including Jabba the Hutt) with skill.

Overall, The Riverfront provided a great stage with fantastic actors. The complex storyline weaving from different settings pulled off flawlessly with a seamless mixture of Welsh, English and French.