

REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN
by Alice Birch

Textual Support Material

Reviews of Sydney Performance Season (pp 1 - 3)

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THE BUZZ FROM SYDNEY
Review by Sylvia Keays

<http://www.thebuzzfromsydney.com/theatre/revolt-she-said-revolt-again-by-alice-birch-old-505-theatre/>

Ploughing through – powerful, strong, alive and intense – this play takes the audience on a steadfast and unpredictable journey. You will not know exactly where you are going, but sense that this theatrical experience will be a most memorable one. Broken up into four acts – each act completely different from the last – in style and scenario. Each scene is identified by an abstract title, such as “Revolutionize the language (invert it)”, or “Revolutionize the world (don’t reproduce)” and “Revolutionize the body (stop eating).”

The through line in the play is sexual politics and sexual abuse – abuse women have endured throughout history, and abuse that is thoroughly rife in society today. Playwright Alice Birch is seething in her expression of this injustice and inequality and has created this piece that has fierce impact and is unapologetic in form.

Act one begins somewhat gentle in comparison to the rest of the production. A man and woman talking sex – however she dominates him through language (as a man would to a woman) and leaves him feeling small, a shell of a person, a mere object. Moving to a new scene with a lesbian couple, one proposing marriage to the other. The one proposed to – feeling oppressed and her freedoms threatened by asking to be involved in what she interprets as a patriarchal and essentially misogynistic tradition of companionship. The next scenario is between a female alpha boss, negotiating with her female employee about part time hours – why on earth would she want to work less hours...is the employee pregnant?! [...]

The next powerful scene is about a woman who committed an inappropriate act in a famous grocery store, not unlike Woolworths. The woman expresses herself in monologue that she’s been trying in various ways to destroy everything about herself that makes her a sex object for others. Nothing seems to work, so she has resorted to – ‘they cannot invade if you want it.’

Act two is a singular scene incorporating three generations of women – each woman disturbed directly or indirectly by domestic abuse. The act ends with the granddaughter and grandmother choosing to silence them selves through self -inflicted violence. From here on out, the play becomes more abstract, and a total cacophony of contradictions, overlapping language and theatricality – where neither language nor delivery is in sync with the other.

The stage directions in the script express: ‘most importantly, this play should not be well behaved.’ And this production is indeed far from being well behaved – it’s thrilling to witness and extraordinarily delivered. The acting is truly superb. All of the actors in this piece are beyond committed, fearless and captivating, this is one of the most exciting and alive pieces of theatre that I have had the opportunity to see in some time.

I recommend everyone see this production at the Old 505. It may not all make complete sense, perhaps that is the point. See this for your self – and I challenge any audience member to not walk away feeling intrigued, horrified, impacted – and thrilled by such alive and electric theatre.

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AUDREY JOURNAL

PLAYS THAT QUICKEN THE PULSE ARE TOO RARE: Alice Birch's play exhibits a wildness you don't often see in Sydney's pervasively polite theatre scene.

Review By: Jason Blake

<https://www.audreyjournal.com.au/arts/revolt-she-said-revolt-again-2/>

British writer Alice Birch's incendiary act of theatre raises a fist to patriarchal structures and male violence everywhere: in relationships, the workplace, the family, in the words we speak.

The opening salvo – subtitled “Revolutionise the language (invert it)” – is a comic scene in which a lusting man (played by Richard Hilliar) attempts a verbal seduction. Unmoved by his tone deaf efforts, the woman (Eliza Sanders) takes his language, skews it female and hurls it back. In the next scene, an offer of marriage (featuring Violette Ayad and Anna Cheney) is brutally deconstructed. [...] So it goes, with each scene darker and more chaotic than the one preceding it.

Plays that quicken the pulse are too rare, and *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.* certainly does that. [...] This production, directed by Charles Sanders for the independent company House of Sand, exhibits a wild side you don't often see in Sydney's pervasively polite theatre scene.

It's messy (watermelon, everywhere), compelling and the performances are strong. Birch gives every member of the cast a spotlight moment (one of the more conventional elements of the play) and all rise to the occasion here, especially Cheney as the frazzled boss, [Enya] Daly as the supermarket protester, and actor-dancer Eliza Sanders in a variety of roles.

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BROADWAY WORLD

With Captivating Clarity *REVOLT.SHE SAID.REVOLT AGAIN* Reminds Us That There Is Still A Long Way To Go In Achieving The Respect And Recognition Women Deserve

Review by Jade Kops

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/sydney/article/BWW-REVIEW-With-Captivating-Clarity-REVOLTSHE-SAIDREVOLT-AGAIN-Reminds-Us-That-There-Is-Still-A-Long-Way-To-Go-In-Achieving-Respect-And-Recognition-Women-Deserve-20180506?>

In a world more cognisant of inequality when it comes to gender, Alice Birch's *REVOLT.SHE SAID.REVOLT AGAIN* reminds us that change has not been fully achieved and that we cannot stop fighting. Under Charles Sanders' careful and considered direction, the brilliant cast of six present a range of examples of how the world would look if misogyny and a male dominated culture were challenged by inverting the stories along with expressions of how ingrained the violence and abuse of women has become and therefore the size of the challenge faced to change mindsets.

This work, which saw its stage debut in 2014 with the Royal Shakespeare Company and won Birch the George Devine Award for Most Promising Playwright, is confronting and captivating and unfortunately recognisable and relatable. Charles and his cast [...] are not afraid to challenge the audience with formidable displays of feminine power as they bring to life Birch's words[...]

Whilst Eliza Sanders' history is predominantly as a dancer and choreographer, this foray into dramatic work is wonderful as she presents a delicious confidence and power in scene one whilst being able to capture the innocence of the damaged young child in scene five. Violette Ayad gives a strong, considered but passionate voice to the growing view that marriage is more a transaction than a declaration of love whilst Anna Cheney presents a number of women who have adopted the masculine mentality and seemingly forgotten their feminine roots reminding the audience that change needs to occur without losing sight of who we are and morphing into a male mindset isn't the answer. Enya Daly's turn as the woman attacked by

the supermarket management delivers a captivating monologue of the proposal to remove the power of assault and objectification by offering it in the manner that people argue that burlesque dancers and prostitutes are actually empowered as they dictate the control of their bodies raising the question of whether that power is removed from men, will behaviours change. Moreblessing Maturure is formidable as the supermarket manager talking over her male counterpart but it is her portrayal of a daughter wanting answers from a broken mother as she seeks to offer her own child a better future is the most poignant as the damage of domestic violence is recounted. As the sole male of the piece, Richard Hilliar presents the awful insensitivity of the male voice that lurks through the scenes with the requisite arrogance and ignorance to the weight of his words.

REVOLT.SHE SAID.REVOLT AGAIN is a captivating, confronting call to action. For those that understand the challenges and had moments of recognition, possibly being subjected to the inequality of the patriarchal society, it is a reminder that we still have a fight for lasting change. This is an important work for everyone to see, not just those that are already aware of the need for equality and action but those that may be perpetuating the problems of the patriarchal society, be that male or female. Do not miss this important production.

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SUZY GOES SEE

Review: Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. (House Of Sand) by Suzy Wrong

<https://suzygoessee.com/2018/05/04/review-revolt-she-said-revolt-again-house-of-sand/>

The play begins as though a manual providing instruction on becoming a radical feminist, offering steps of revolutionary action to attain some kind of ideal state of being. For those who understand their subjugation, the idea of taking down the powerful is always appealing, but the truth remains, that vacuums are nonviable and breaking something down requires the installation of something new. Alice Birch's Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. is a thrilling ride for anyone with a taste for rebellion. Its militant spirit is seductive, with powerful declarations that will excite those similarly inclined. The piece evolves unexpectedly, introducing in later portions, complexities that confront its own passionate proclamations of earlier scenes. Birch wants us mobilised, but in a smart way. Activism cannot thrive only on impulse. Long term strategies must accompany courses of action, or we risk ending up at a place worse than before.

The show speaks resonantly, with director Charles Sanders' intellect a fortifying authority that establishes clarity for all its arguments. The politics in Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. are made compelling by Sanders' palpable enthusiasm for the subject matter, and their insistence that we hear its messages, translates into excellent drama. Design style is fairly simple for the production, with Joanne Joy's visual projections particularly effective in helping to assert some of the highly provocative concepts.

All six performers for the piece are impressive, each one given ample opportunity to put on display their individual talents, as well as a unifying and admirable conviction pertaining to the material at hand. Eliza Sanders imbues her lines with authenticity and precision, delivering a delightful acerbity with every utterance, and equally memorable for her disciplined physical expressions. The imposing figure of Moreblessing Maturure is accompanied with a tender vulnerability, especially convincing in a maternal role, conveying unassailable qualities of our humanity with beautiful restraint and confidence. The lone thorn among the roses is Richard Hilliar, whose comedy hits all the right notes, whether understated, madcap or frighteningly bombastic. Violette Ayad and Enya Daly bring emotion when we least expect it, creating additional dimensions to an already rich work, and Anna Cheney's ability to oscillate between realism and the flamboyantly bizarre, has us fascinated and entertained.

Anarchy may not be the answer we need, but the power of resistance must never be underestimated. Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again. is full of inspiration, for those of us who recognise the concerns that it raises.

Act One

REVOLUTIONIZE THE LANGUAGE. (INVERT IT.)

– I don't understand.

.

I don't understand how you do what you do to me.

– I don't Do anything to you.

I Don't.

I do

Whatever I do

And whatever You think or feel or

Whatever

Is all you – is All you.

– I want to make love to you.

You are a Brilliant Bright Bright thing – do you have any idea what your shoulders, bare like that, do to me, do to my structure, to my insides – I want to make a brooch out of your hair and your pupils and your ribs – and I know that sounds fucking – but I want to pin that to my heart and let my blood drain I'm done it's You let's Everybody Out Now World I Am Gone.

.

I bought you bluebells.

I made him wrap them – I had the little man wrap them in brown paper for you – I want – and I have been thinking – All Day Long

That I want to make love to you – don't move, don't move, just for a second just could you stay exactly where you are?

– I

– You look completely perfect

- Can I
- You look completely and utterly perfect – stay exactly as you are
- .
- Can I just
put this down?
- No
- Are you – ?
- It's your body – it's the line of your body
- Yeah, but can I
- It's the line your neck makes
- Makes?
- Your hip, there like that
- It's just my / hip
- / Is perfection
- I'm just.
I'm going to move now
Because there's all this [mess] to clear up and.
- You're perfection.
- What's that [noise] – is that a
- Perfection
- Nightingale or a
- Complete Perfection
- Wine? Do you want wine?
- All through dinner, all I could think about was getting you home and making love to you
– the only thought in my head, the whole way through that fucking cheese course was
That mole
on your jaw
and how I wanted to lick it.
- You ate loads of cheese
- I was thinking about licking your mole
- You ate an Enormous amount of cheese – I was beginning to feel Worried, I was
considering Expressing Concern – you physically Put me off cheese, I could barely finish
my watermelon – d'you want a drink or

- I can barely hear what you're saying - I'm obsessed - I barely heard a word Anyone said
- all I could think about was fucking you
- They were talking about North Korea
- Your lips. That lip.
- Over cheese. I thought you were really into it, I thought you were really Absorbed -
- you looked - they were talking about prison camps and
- Genocide - about Mass
- Genocide - you looked. You Looked Moved.
- All I could think about was coming home, laying you down upon that bed
- That bit about that family who'd had all their fingers cut off, I thought
- Thinking about you and
- I thought you were were Welling Up
- Laying you down upon that bed
- And making love to you.
- .
- And making love to you
- .
- Laying you down. And making love to you.
- Or
- No or
- Or
- There Is no Or - there is no other option
- Yes but
- I want to make Love to you
- Or
- With?
- .
- With.
- With.
- .
- With you - make love - I want to make love With you
- Yeah?
- Yeah
- Yeah

- Yes
- Aaaaand?
- And, yes, and and kissing you, I want to kiss you – With you, I want to kiss With / you
- / Kissing you is fine
- Kissing you and and holding you and putting my hand at the bottom of your back
and and
What?
- It's the Putting, the Putting sounds
- Putting
- Something about it sounds
- Putting? putting? putting. putting. putt ting. put ting I
- No no no no, okay, no you're right, you're right, putting is fine, putting is Good, putting is
– you're putting – putting – putting your hand at the bottom of my back
- And and I'm kissing you
- Yeah
- I'm kissing you and and pressing you to me – can I say pressing?
- If I feel like I want to be pressed – which, now I think of it, yes, I do – then yes
- Good
- Really good
- Pressing you to me so Fucking Hard – is that
- Keep going
- That when you fall back into your own space the marks of me are all over you
- And me on you
- Like a a a a an imprint and a
- And me on you
- And I'm kissing your neck
- Marks of me are on you though
- I'm kissing, I'm kissing hard and I'm running my hands up and down your sides again
and again and again and
- And I'm on you
- You're on me
- I'm on you
- And I want to feel you Shiver – shiver in a good way in a brilliant way
- Okay



- Yeah and and then, then I'm going to peel your dress off – slow – and and don't laugh
- Not laugh / ing
- / And you
- Not laughing but I'm also not a potato
- You can peel my clothes off
- You are also not a potato this is not potato / sex
- / And I'm I'm kissing you, all over
- Mmmm?
- Yeah I'm kissing you all over and and I'm going to spread your legs
- Oh?
- Or you will spread them. When you are ready to spread them.
- Mmmm
- Uh huh
- What was that
- I don't know – so so
- Or you could spread yours
- Or. Yes. Or. I. Yes. I suppose I could spread mine.
- Yes, why don't you spread yours?
- Okay. Yes. Okay. I will spread my legs
- Yeah?
- Yeah
- Yeah.
- Spread them.
- But first. First. Could you spread yours?
- No.
- Alright. Alright.
- Spread them.
- I. Um. I don't want to Spread them – could / we not say Spread
- / You don't want / to spread them now
- / sort of sounds like margarine or
- Open?
- Open.
- Yes. YES.
- Open. Open is good

- Open
- So, so you open, we both open, but I open Your legs
- You open my / legs
- / Your legs and I want to Lick you, I want to extend my tongue and I want to lick you
- I'll lick you back
- .
- Okay.
- Yeah, I'll extend my tongue
- And my tongue is up inside you
- And I'll put my tongue up inside you
- And my fingers are up inside you now
- And I'll put my fingers up inside you
- And and - where? Where are / your fingers
- / Up inside your mouth, your arse, your
- Don't say arse
- Bum
- Don't say bum, I can't do
- Your Back Alley
- I have my hand up inside you
- She spits.*
- Then I have my whole fist up inside you
- Ummmm
- You Like that
- I feel Conflicted about
- Then take your hand out
- I'm going to fuck you
- I'm going to fuck you straight back
- And I'm going to take my cock / and
- / AndI'mgoingtotakemyvaginaandputitOnyouFIRST
- .
- What was that?
- I get there first.
- Yeah?
- Yeah I am On you before you are In me



- Are you
- I'm going to take my vagina
- Hang on
- I'm taking my vagina
- You can't Take your vagina
- I am Taking My Vagina
- You cannot Take a a a a Gap
- My Vagina is an Organ, my Vagina is not a Gap
- It
- How fucking Dare you - you are lucky to be anywhere Near my / Organ
- / Your Organ is On My Organ
- My Organ is On Your Organ
- It's on my Big Hard Organ
- It's All over it
- Yeah, I'm pushing
- I'm pushing back
- And I'm pushing
- And I'm Slamming it back down with my organ
- And I'm
- And I'm Enveloping you
- Like. As in
- I'm Surrounding you
- Surround me, okay, yes, yes Surround me
- I am Consuming you
- Baby consume me
- And I - don't call me baby - I am Gorging on you, I am Making You My Dildo
- And so the the so / the
- / I am Drowning and Suffocating and Overwhelming you with my Giant Organ
- Well, it's cos / it's
- / I am Scissoring you
- That's
- I am Fucking Scissoring you to bits
- Is that
- I am Scissoring and Slicing you



- Then I am Screwing you
- And I am Spannering you
- I
- I am Completely Spannering you and I am Jumping you and Hiding you and Chomping down upon you
- Not what I
- I am Blanketing and Locking you and Draining The Life of you with my Massive Structured Beautifully built Almighty Vagina.
- .
- Alright?
- Are you Alright?
- .
- No?
- I just I
- No?
- Then I will Take Your Penis
- Sorry.
- sorry.
- I. I. with the um. I. I feel. I.
- sorry I will take my Vagina. Off your penis.
- Okay?

REVOLUTIONIZE THE WORLD. (DO NOT MARRY.)

- I don't understand why you're so - I just. I.
- I wasn't expecting it.
- .
- It's not the. Sweetheart. It's not the uhhh. Sort of thing. You Expect. Or look Out for.
- Or.
- Or.