

The Show Might Go On!

Director, Shaun Chambers gives an insight into *STOP! ...The Play*

Stop! ...The Play ran in the West End at Trafalgar Studios, the original home of Brian Rix's Whitehall farces, in the summer of 2015 to rave reviews.

Stop! ...The Play sits in similar territory to Michael Frayn's backstage farce, *Noises Off!* and the similarities are striking. However, in *Noises Off!* in spite of various obstacles (including several slamming doors and copious amounts of sardines), the cast at least have a finalised script and an experienced director to rely on. In *Stop! ...The Play*, David Spicer removes all safety nets and leaves the cast to freefall into chaos. We have Hildred McCann, the elsewhere playwright who changes the script daily and never for the better. Evelyn Mackintosh, the first-time director who lacks any of the artistic or personal qualities required to direct a play. This is a real case of the blind leading the blind. Add to this a cast who are disengaged, confused and frustrated and you have all the ingredients of a disaster waiting to happen...and indeed it does!

In Act One, Spicer shows us the genuine chaos of the rehearsal process and gives us an insightful gaze into how theatre is made. We see the terrible script get worse and worse as it undergoes a complete metamorphosis before our very eyes. If that wasn't enough, we are then forced to watch the world's worst play in all its glory in Act Two as the characters literally have to make the play up as they go along due to the completely unproductive rehearsal process. As the cast state: 'We don't know what we're doing. We're under-rehearsed. We don't have a set.' This is definitely a case of suffering for one's art.

Spicer dedicates this play *To All Actors Everywhere* and I am sure that anybody who has been involved in theatre would share the pain of the cast and know that the play is not only observant, but painfully true!

So in the words of Evelyn, we hope we 'give the audience a night in the theatre that they are never going to forget...or forgive!'



NORTHERN COMEDY THEATRE

www.northerncomedytheatre.com

info@northerncomedytheatre.com

