

UNDER THE RADAR

WELCOME TO UNDER THE RADAR 2010

THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER IS A MAGICAL TIME OF YEAR. THE FIRST RAYS OF SPRING SUNSHINE STREAM THROUGH THE CLOUDS, PEOPLE START HAVING PICNICS AGAIN, AND THE BRISBANE FESTIVAL TAKES OVER THE CITY. AND AS PART OF **BRISBANE FESTIVAL** IS **UNDER THE RADAR**, A SHOWCASE OF EDGY CONTEMPORARY THEATRE FEATURING PERFORMERS ACROSS AUSTRALIA. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO EXPLORE CHILDHOOD ANXIETIES (*CHEER UP KID*) AND SOCIAL NETWORKING (*SMUDGED*), BE OFFENDED BY COUNTRY BOGANS (*COUSIN LOVE*) AND POSSIBLY PUSHED BY AN INTERACTIVE SAUNA (*THE BATHERS*), AND GO ON MUSICAL JOURNEYS WITH ZACK ADAMS (*LOVE SONGS FOR FUTURE GIRL*) AND SUNWRAE TRIO (*PRIMAVERA*). BUT LET'S LEAVE IT UP TO THE PERFORMERS THEMSELVES TO HELP YOU DECIDE, SHALL WE? READ ON, FOLKS, TO ENTER THE WORLD OF UNDER THE RADAR.

DANIEL CRICHTON-ROUSE
EDITOR



THE PROBLEM WITH EVIL

Leon Ewing is a self-confessed unrepentant nihilist — and in a strange way, that's the driving force behind his art, he says. The humour in his show *The Problem With Evil* is beyond dark, to the point of absurdity.

"People often wet themselves at the time, and then days later think to themselves, 'I can't believe I laughed at that,'" Ewing says. "But the show is intentionally provocative. I would like to shock audiences into action, but I'm an utter nihilist myself. I read *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy and felt like I had come home. I read John Birmingham for laughs."

So, as a nihilist, does this mean that Ewing reckons that Evil has already won, and that humanity is on a slippery slope to its own doom?

"Yeah, I think the time for action has been and gone, and we didn't give a fuck," he says. "The only thing left is to enjoy the twilight years of our civilisation — beyond a human timescale the planet will adapt and evolve, but I

think we have reached an evolutionary dead end. I'm open to being proven wrong, but I don't see the evidence that we are up to the task.

"Interestingly, it is this nihilism that motivates me to lead a rich and full and happy life, because I don't believe in the future — only the moment. There is a great Charlie Chaplin quote: 'Life is a tragedy when seen in close-up, but a comedy in long-shot.'"

This might all sound a bit depressing — but it's given Ewing a new perspective on the world. Rather than getting depressed by, say, an oil spill, he thinks "Hey, great material!"

So, fuck it, Brisbane — we might as well enjoy the time we have left, and *The Problem With Evil* seems a mighty fine way to piss away one of our last few precious hours — a PowerPoint presentation with live feeds of puppets manipulated into cameras, beatboxing fish, and skeletons playing rockabilly.

BAZ MCALISTER

WHAT: *The Problem With Evil*

WHERE & WHEN: The Studio, Metro Arts Monday Sep 20 to Wednesday Sep 22



THE POMEGRANATE CYCLE

Violence against women is an ugly and deeply embedded side of our society. It's odd, then, that such an act would be so frequently depicted — with arguable indifference — in the otherwise graceful and aesthetically sophisticated world of opera. Eve Klein thought so too, and it was this realisation that led to the eventual development of her take on violence against women, as inspired by the story of Persephone, in *The Pomegranate Cycle*.

"In many operas, female characters experience violence, go mad and die or are killed," Klein explains. "Rarely do they pick up the pieces of their life and live it again. When I was teaching music technology, I had worked with a number of students who used the recording process to tell stories of how they healed from violence. My experience with these students was that the technology empowered them to move their stories to a new space, a place where they felt comfortable with themselves and their history. With *Pomegranate I* wanted to draw from that idea and use the textures of ambient electronica to break open stories of violence depicted in traditional opera and tell a story of healing."

It's an ambitious goal, to be sure, but one that Klein seems entirely capable of achieving. She's an intelligent lady; she's laden her work with metaphors and meanings that provide added emotional depth for those who understand them — although she does concede that perhaps the best place from which to grasp *Pomegranate's* true scope is from the audience.

"Pomegranates are laden with meaning. They have been used as a symbol of divinity and worship across many cultures, and are present in the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam," Klein says knowingly. "A lot of the earliest opera was based around ancient Greek mythology so I wanted to draw from that tradition, and based *The Pomegranate Cycle* around the myth known as *The Rape of Persephone*. In the myth, Hades steals Persephone into the Underworld. While there he tricks her into eating pomegranate seeds. When she is allowed to return to her mother, she is told that she must return to the underworld each year for several months, effectively winter, because she has eaten the seeds."

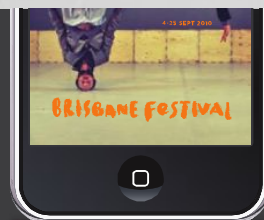
MITCH KNOX

WHAT: *The Pomegranate Cycle*

WHERE & WHEN: Out the Back, Metro Arts Thursday Sep 16 to Sunday Sep 19

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