

King Arthur (2009) by Lucy Nordberg ☆☆☆

Political reworking of the traditional legend

Don't expect any magic swords or epic heroics in this ambitious production by Scottish company Siege Perilous. Here an innovative script by Lucy Nordberg strips the Arthurian tale of its supernatural trappings and instead uses the power play between characters to give insight into modern day political debate.

Arthur, who has ruled over a people whose culture is heavily based in tradition and ritual, announces his intention to give every person 'a voice' and instigate a democracy to be watched over by his young and naïve son Mordred. These idealistic plans are not warmly received by all at Arthur's court as fear and greed propel the action and Mordred becomes a pawn for the ambition of others.

The Renaissance style of this production marries iambic pentameter form with contemporary language and issues in an engaging fusion of tradition and modernity. Competent performances carry the challenging material, but occasionally rapid delivery can make the plot difficult to follow. If you can keep up, however, the debates raised by this bold piece of theatre will linger with you long after the show has ended.

Amy Russell; 'The List'