

Check the Program

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August 26 at 9:01 AM

Fringe review: “Water People” (Venue 2: Downtown Activity Centre)

 **4 stars (out of 5)**

Local playwright and actor Ellen Arrand (“Trutch Street Women”) has crafted a wonderfully delicate monologue here that’s as engaging and compelling as it is lovingly layered. While it will likely most resonate with anyone familiar with the struggle to balance aging parents, creative aspirations and tightening finances, you really don’t have to fit into any of those categories to enjoy this show.

Directed with minimal but effective staging by local veteran Clayton Jevne, “Water People” dips into Dylan Thomas-like territory thanks to its strong mix of memory, home, family, community, physical details, interior reflections and cadenced delivery. While Arrand does little more than stand centre-stage and tell us a story, it’s hard not to be captivated by the simplest details as we (to quote her script) “listen with the third ear, the ear of the heart”.

The complete antithesis to all those stereotypically “kooky” Fringe tropes, “Water People” eschews any naked angsty improv dancing for a simple tale beautifully told.

—JT

VICTORIA NEWS

August 27, 2018
By Sheila Martindale

Monday Magazine contributor

<https://www.vicnews.com/entertainment/fringe-fest-reviews-flamenco-and-teen-angst-among-the-topics-explored-in-festival-entries/>

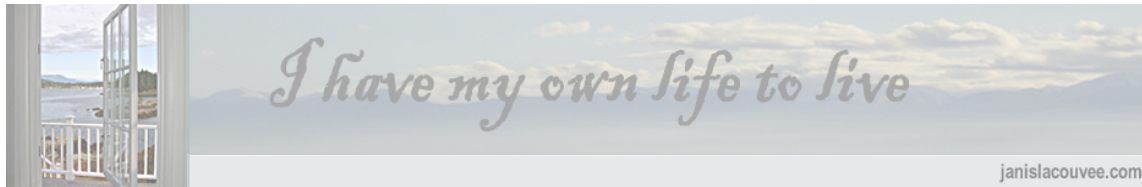
Monday's intrepid theatre reviewer give some insights in to Victoria Fringe Festival entries.

Water People – Ellen Arrand

The 'good' daughter takes her very elderly and disabled mother in and looks after her, giving up her own career to do so; the 'bad' daughter has not communicated with her family for 25 years, but puts in place a system of accusing her sister of elder abuse.

Ellen Arrand has written this play and performs it single-handedly and compassionately. Using just a stool as a prop, she takes us through her day, her week and her year. With her we enjoy the weekly few hours respite, provided by a kind and talented friend. None of this is done in any kind of complaining tone, as she attempts to balance the chequebook and her life.

Water People is directed by **Theatre Inconnu's Clayton Jevne** – put it at the top of your Fringe list! It plays at the Downtown Community Centre until Sept. 2.



<http://janislacouvee.com/dispatches-from-the-victoria-fringe-2018-day-two/>

Dispatches from the Victoria Fringe 2018. Day Two.
August 25, 2018 By @lacouvee [Leave a Comment](#)

Review of Water People by Ellen Arrand, produced by Theatre Inconnu,

Ellen Arrand is a beautifully descriptive writer, her long phrases replete with the details of life and a sense of wonder at the world. Delving deep into inner states of mind and the minutiae of daily caretaking for an elderly mother, she finds humour, love and small victories in abundance.

Over the course of the show, the many relationships—to her mother and father, husband and siblings, and various friends and confidantes—are clearly delineated. Her cat has pride of place too!

At a time when there are as many people over 80 as under 15 in Canada, the realities of Water People abound in the lives of its citizens—to care for an elder at home in a shared living situation is not uncommon, yet the voices of those involved are not often heard in the mainstream.

Carving out precious time for writing in a “10-year stint (so far)” of looking after her mother is clearly a monumental endeavour—as outlined in the story of attending students’ year end productions at UVic where Arrand goes back and forth from home to university multiple times during the day.

Director Clayton Jevne is a master of solo-storytelling himself; he’s paid close attention to the physicality of the piece, choreographing movement that adds interest and grace to the narrative.

Water People is filled to the brim with humanity—a small slice of life of ordinary people, finding pleasure in the simple tasks of daily living in what many would consider difficult circumstances.

Although Water People would seem to be best suited to an audience of aging baby boomers—concerned with their parents’ and their own needs—younger audiences too can benefit from the insights it provides.