



Black Theatre Workshop's She Said/He Said

Description

Performance poetry combined with theatrical delivery

By **Byron Toben**

Anne-Marie Woods (aka Amani) in her own words, lets her “poetic rhapsodies” in words “bleed onto the page”.

Thus in the world premiere of her latest work, *She Said/He Said*, the attraction and arguments between the excellent actors, SHE (Mariah Inger) and HE (Christian Paul) as they try to define their relationships as a WE are punctuated by “spoken word” monologues to the beat of slow dance “back in the day” rhythms as well as more contemporary rap deliveries.



Mariah Inger

I prefer to categorize spoken word more, as our local star of the genre, Cat Kidd does, as performance poetry. Anyway, whatever you call it, I have followed it since Jack Kerouac read Poetry to Jazz on bongo drums and sax back in the 60s.

Here, the two pronoun stars are singles in their late 30s looking for “the one”. Although much is made of the fact that they are both black persons, the initial attractions and ultimate hesitations are universal. Is she too picky, too bossy? Is he too non committal with a wandering eye? I particularly enjoyed his fantasizing himself as the black John Travolta from Saturday Night Fever with his moves and attitude.

The whole was presented by Black Theatre Workshop director Quincy Armorer on a mosaic floor of reflective glassy particles, enhanced by reflective material on the back walls of the opposite rows of seats in a corridor style configuration

Perhaps Men are really from Mars, Women from Venus. The problem of errant communication between couples despite initial attraction has long been reflective in other ways. The simplest in film was Tarzan’s reaction to her query “We have to define our relationship. What is it?” “Me Tarzan... You Jane”

And of course, Shaw’s quip that “The problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

She Said/He Said closes on **Sunday, May 1** at the MAI, 3680 Jeanne-Mance, Montreal.

Tickets: 514-982-3386 or billetterie.m-a-i.qc.ca



Images: Antoine Saito

Byron Toben is the immediate past-president of the Montreal Press Club

Category

1. Review

Tags

1. Anne-Marie Woods
2. Black Theatre Workshop
3. Byron Toben
4. couples
5. play
6. relationships

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