

PuSh International Performing Arts Festival

January 21– February 9, 2020 | pushfestival.ca

Footnote Number 12 by THEATRE REPLACEMENT (from Canada and Norway)



February 6th at 8PM, February 7th & 8th at 6PM

At Performance Works

Price: \$39

Image description

Two people sit at a wooden table. On the left, a man with a blue polo shirt, green hat and white makeup on his face and blue around the eyes. His forearms are on the table, he stares down blankly. On the other side a younger

woman in shorts and a plaid shirt, she has her black hair tied back and beneath her long bangs are thinly rimmed round glasses. There is a computer in front of her but she is looking towards us and pointing at something.

Introduction for patrons with sight loss

When the audience enters, on each seat they find a book of essays by David Foster Wallace called *Both Flesh and Not*. On stage there is a table with two stools behind it and another off to the side. On the table are three small piles of paper and a copy of *Both Flesh and Not*. The lighting are series of coloured patterns on the ground.

Two people enter the stage, the performer (James Long), 6 ft tall, white, average build, average in just about every way in fact, stands in the upper corner of the stage. The sound artist/operator (Nancy Tam), 5 ft tall and of Asian descent positions herself in a seat at the front of the audience behind an assortment of technical mixing gear.

James, 46 years old, is dressed in ill-fitting olive pants, a blue golf shirt, a Beaver Lumber high hat and red high-top Air Jordans. It's not a great look. Some reviewers have called it 'hay-seed farmer'. We like to think of it as if a middle-aged dad failed at looking hip. He wears make-up. Half zombie, half clown. His face is white, with blue circles around the eyes.

Nancy, 30 years old, is dressed in all black like an authentically hipster artist.

James wears a headset mic and his voice is modulated by Nancy throughout 80% of the performance. The audience is surrounded by speakers allowing them to be enveloped in this mediated sound.

When James changes seats, his voice switches through three main voices; high pitched enthusiasm (we like to call Kermit), bass authoritarian (we like to call Sam the Eagle) to floaty consideration (we like to call Hillary). Later in the piece you will also hear James' natural, unmediated amplified voice as well as his unmediated unamplified voice.

Over 70 minutes the two performers attempt to deconstruct a 2006 essay by David Foster Wallace. James by reading his thoughts off papers in front of him on the table, Nancy by modulating the voice. Sometimes what's read is a genuine celebration of the essay and its subject, but he also points out and considers some words and phrases he feels are dated or perhaps incorrect for the current political context. When the low bass voice reads it is direct from the book.

Every time he finishes reading a piece of paper, he crumples it into a ball. Once three are present, either he or Nancy throw them in a simulated game of Bocce. The target is a small white dot of light to the right of the table. James mumbles as he plays.

Mid way through the show James takes the set apart as he rants. He closes the stools, rips off the table top, takes apart the table's legs. It's a bit of a temper tantrum. This action is followed by a silence of 20 seconds or so. He then speaks again, and places a single stool in the middle of the stage. Nancy will then stand up from her seat and join him on stage. She will sing a song he sang earlier and then return to her seat and technical gear. The lights shift from to a plain white box and James returns to speaking, but this time all from the one stool sitting at the centre of the stage.

Later in the piece, during an extended period of silence, James gets up and gently places the various pieces of the set and crumpled balls of paper off to the side of the playing area, remove his hat and shoes and return once again to the central seat to speak some more.

The lights snap off at the end following a final reading.

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