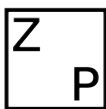


Medusa



Presented by Zanetti Productions
Created by Nisha Madhan, Julia Croft and Virginia Frankovich

Circa Two

Sep 21 – Oct 6
\$30 Preview 20 Sep

Tues – Sat 7.30pm, Sun 4.30pm
\$25 – \$35

Part of WTF! Women's Theatre Festival



Medusa is a blood boiler, a stealthy deconstruction, and one of feminism's great reclamations.

Creating a Monster

Before the Greco-Romans got a hold of Medusa she was already a big, black, powerful and mysterious snake-headed symbol of the kind of beauty that is so ferocious and unafraid of itself that it can turn you to stone with just one look.

When Ovid came along Medusa's story took a devastating patriarchal turn. A pure beauty who was raped by Neptune in the temple of Athena, then punished by the jealous Goddess and turned into a monster with a head full of poisonous snakes. Unable to look at anyone without turning them to stone she was outcast until Perseus came along and beheaded her. Perseus then used her head to conquer his enemies turning each one to stone before finally arriving home to tell tales of his heroic feats with Medusa inserted as only an afterthought.

Since then the Gorgon has stood in for various representations of femininity. The rageful, monstrous Medusa was reclaimed by second wave feminists as a figure of empowerment. Anger, carnality and sexual desire were reignited through her. Sylvia Plath wrote a poem about her. Annie Lennox named an album after her. Versace claimed her image as an icon of high fashion, while meme artists worldwide told women (in no uncertain) terms that if you wanted to be powerful like Hillary Clinton, be ready to be called a nasty woman and see your head photoshopped into every image of Medusa they could find.

Who can resist using the snake infested monster as a metaphorical pool within which to swim?! Medusa is rich with mysteries unfolding, things that lurk in the dark, cosmic fascination and subconscious activity oozing out of every pore, as well as a frenzy of socio-political readings.

Rather than retell the story according to Ovid, we decided to deconstruct and tease out the classic narratives so we could explore what a female gaze could look like and how it can hold power. We love image based, physical and non-narrative structures because they feel more like the world as we understand it.



Credit: Andi Crown - Photography; Nisha Madhan - Collage; William Duignan - Design

Our worlds are not stories that have beginnings, middles and neatly tied up ends. Our worlds start in the middle of ever continuing circles, of triangles within triangle, eyes within eyes. It's a messy world that sometimes doesn't make sense. No wonder our theatre shows reflect this.

We make theatre that is different to the norm and as feminists in a world where the norm is deeply guided by white-cis-male privilege, well...can you blame us for trying something different? As Mary Beard so eloquently put in her recent manifesto, Women and Power, "you can't easily fit women into a structure that is already coded as male; you have to change the structure."

So what you will get is a kind of theatre poem; an ode to the monster within us all; a calling; an uprising; an awakening; a destructive use of staging; a multidisciplinary collage of theatricality and Live Art. It may be challenging. But then, life is challenging when you live in a margin.

We hope you'll join us in our ritual of questioning the power structures around us. If you trust us and work with us through the experience, we promise to sit patiently with you, suspend time for you and deliver you something visually and sonically golden / monstrous / beautiful.

- Nisha Madha, Julia Croft & Virginia Frankovich