

# MIXED by TheatreWorks

---

 [centre42.sg/mixed-by-theatreworks](http://centre42.sg/mixed-by-theatreworks)

## “Mixed Feelings“

---

**Reviewer: Isaac Tan**

**Performance: 2 March 2017**

Chosen from TheatreWorks’ 24-Hour Playwriting Competition 2016 to be developed into a proper show, *Mixed* bears the hallmarks of a script that is written under pressure, and in a short span of time.

The scenes in this show – about the pressures and stigma faced by mixed couples and their children – progresses too fast to allow the audience sufficient time to process what is happening.

The male actors (Gabriele Goh and Joel Low) are hampered by the quick march of the script, too. To make matters worse, their lines do not have much for them to settle into their characters before the next scene comes along, which result in sketchy characterisations and cursory performances. That said, playwright Raemae Kok did leave a couple of clues – such as Lee (Gabriele Goh) having an alcoholic father, and Mr Lim (Joel Low) being an eldest son in a traditional Chinese family – which the actors could have used to deepen their characterisation, but don’t.

In contrast, the women have more emotional lines to tap into, which consequently leaves a slightly deeper impact on the audience. Grace Kalaiselvi plays Cassandra, Lee’s wife, who worries about her parents not accepting her Chinese husband. Sneha Sudha Sanjay plays Nina, the rebellious student of mixed parentage. Sherilyn Tan plays Anika Lee, daughter of Cassandra and Lee, and a teacher-in-training who falls in love with her colleague while trying to help Nina.

Even with meatier lines, they are also affected by the rapid scenes with Sanjay getting the shortest end of the stick. She has the unenviable position of containing Nina’s emotional turmoil, without the opportunity of showing her wounds until the end of the show. Thus, Nina largely comes across as a brooding and angsty teenager.

Despite these flaws, Raemae Kok must be commended for sensitively channelling a personal struggle into a creative output for the stage. Her finest touch is manifested in her choice of having Nina as a foil to the battle-weary Anika. Both characters reach out to one another, in their own ways, but miss the much needed connection by a hair’s breadth. Director Tan Shou Chen wonderfully realises this by having Nina solemnly sit on a chair as Anika painfully looks on. The latter then delivers her monologue to express the hurt she bore, and the words that Nina could not find to say.

Perhaps the most painful aspect of the show is that we have heard the message before – several playwrights have tackled various issues of race, and the harm that our strict categories inflict on certain groups of people. The fact that, in 2016, a 17-year-old still feels the need to address similar problems shows how little our conversation on race has progressed.

Do you have an opinion or comment about this post? Email us at [info@centre42.sg](mailto:info@centre42.sg).

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

---

### **MIXED by TheatreWorks**

23 February – 9 March 2017

Multi-Purpose Hall, Eurasian Community House

## **ABOUT THE REVIEWER**

---

**Isaac** started reviewing plays for the student publication, Kent Ridge Common, and later developed a serious interest in theatre criticism after taking a module at university. He is also an aspiring poet, and has a passion for acting and flamenco dancing.