



Jared Wilson went to *The Last Supper* A performance piece by Reckless Sleepers

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to know when you are going to die? This is a most macabre honour and one usually reserved for either the suicidal or those deviants on death row, waiting to be executed for their crimes against humanity.

There are few perks to the latter role. The uniforms are dull, the conversation of your fellow inmates has most likely passed the point of no return and the chances of escape or reprieve are on one hand deliciously tempting, but on the other remains very unlikely.

In fact the only real plus point of such a role is your last meal. One of the only personal choices you are still allocated at such a desperate hour, this is the final option to send yourself off to the afterlife with a belly full of your favourite delicacies. This, after the rest of society has judged that you don't deserve to live anymore...

The Last Supper from Nottingham's Reckless Sleepers Theatre group was one of the most interesting performance pieces I have witnessed in some time. Thirty or so dinner guests arrived at the studio (located at the end of Hockley, opposite the ice stadium). On arrival, each was issued with an inmate number and a slip of paper detailing the crimes and identity of someone who had once been executed for their crimes.

We waited in the lobby for a short while, studying our newly assumed identities, before the hosts opened the doors to the main dining room. Then, one by one, we were separated and led to a seat in the main room. This room consisted of four rows of dining tables facing into each other in a large white room, lit by candles in a big chandelier, which hung from the ceiling.

When we had all taken our seats the show began. There were three hosts, (played over the three nights of performance by Pascale Petralia, Tim Ingram, Jessica Hoffman, Mole Wetherell). They began a witty rapport with each other, going round the tables pouring the guests glasses of wine and conversed about the deaths of celebrities and historical figures ranging from Elvis to Einstein and Joan of Ark to Jesus.

Their always witty and fluid banter outlined the last moments of each persons life, with their interpretations of the incident that led to the downfall and the last words they spoke at the event. This was all mixed in seamlessly to an atmospheric and eclectic soundtrack.

The performance was punctuated every few minutes by the arrival of a waitress carrying meals for one the condemned. These were bought in and described to the rest of the group, as the hosts directed the food to the correct diner.

The quality of the meals varied from the excessive ("for his last meal he asked for a platter of fruit including a coconut, a mango, grapes, banana's, a plate of salad, two hamburgers, two glasses of fruit juice and a chocolate birthday cake,") to the disappointing ("he asked for no last meal.") Some diners got far too much food and some got none. It was random and brilliant! We weren't really there to eat!

Although the performance appeared unscripted throughout, to further the metaphor the final words spoken by every famous person the hosts mentioned had been transcribed on to pieces of paper. As the hosts finished reading their words, they tore into the paper and ate it. This small act itself was an impressive spectacle and added an interesting twist. This journalist also noted the surprisingly large amount of sugar paper that the three of them got through!

This performance would appeal to anyone who has ever found themselves titilated by stories about how famous people died. The hour and a half that I was sitting there flew by almost too quickly as my slightly morbid fascination with death was satiated. I really enjoyed this performance and left with my thoughts fully provoked and a slight chill down the spine! It was definitely the weirdest dinner party that i've ever been to...