



Slave: A Question Of Freedom

The Lowry

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By Natalie Anglesey | Thu, 25 November, 2010

The world premiere of this important new play proved to be a star-studded, emotional evening, primarily because it's about a 21st century problem that many are completely unaware exists.

There are 27 million people in slavery today - more than when the notorious slave trade was at its peak.

This is the real life story of just one of them, a young woman named Mende Nazer, who wrote a book about her incredible experience. It's a story that shames society and yet elicits admiration for her struggle to survive against incredible odds.

Mende was abducted from her village in the remote Nuba Mountains of Sudan by raiders who burnt her village and murdered or raped their victims before stealing the children. She was twelve years old.

After seven years in captivity, in 2000 she was passed on to a Sudanese diplomat's family in London. Although she managed to escape she faced a new struggle to obtain asylum with the help of journalist Damien Lewis.

It's this story which Caroline Clegg, Founder and Director of the excellent Feelgood Theatre Productions, has staged with Kevin Fegan as co-writer and adaptor.

A terrific ensemble cast of eight international artistes performs this story of an innocent young girl who led a simple life before her enslavement.

Clegg directs with sensitivity and much of the success of this production lies in its mixture of narrative, dance and music. I promise it will provide much food for thought.

The real Mende, alongside Damien Lewis, joined the director on stage for a well-deserved standing ovation. Joining in the applause were Coronation Street stars Sue Nicholls, her husband Mark Eden, Julie Hesmondhalgh, Katy Cavanagh and David Fleeshman - all strong supporters of the fight against slavery.

Slave is at The Lowry for the rest of this week before it goes to London.