

'Orphans' shows dark side

Perfectly Sane at Lorne



● Torquay-based street performer Justin Sane is a former circus Oz performer and one of the highlights of the Lorne Festival.

■ The 2014 Lorne Festival being presented from August 29-31 will feature many highlights, including an Opening Night Spectacular at the Circus Oz Big Top, showcasing the weekend's events, including DJs, burlesque, theatre, music and circus all crammed into one big spectacular opening night.

Other highlights include Moira Finucane performing two burlesque shows, and the Lorne Historical Society Heritage Walk (a two-hour walk starting at the Lorne Visitors' Information Centre and ending at the Lorne Historical Society rooms).

Mikelangelo will perform in three shows and *Squaring The Wheel* is a show forging

the extraordinary tales of Jens Altheimer – circus, theatre, puppetry, magic and 'ingenious collector of thingummybobs'.

The *League of Sideshow Superstars* is a collection of Australia's elite sideshow performers who create fun and exciting content.

Their show blends cabaret, acrobatics, performance, theatre, music and a plethora of other idiosyncrasies into a delightful blend of tricks and stunts.

For Lorne Festival event dates and times, or to book tickets, please visit www.lovelornefestival.com.au, visit the Lorne Information Centre or call 1300 365 901.

- Cheryl Threadgold



● Helen (Shian Denovan) in *Orphans* at Brunswick Mechanics Institute until August 23.

■ Danny and Helen are about to enjoy a romantic dinner, when Helen's brother Liam enters covered in blood.

As far as date-nights going wrong, Dennis Kelly's grim play *Orphans* presents an evening that couldn't get much worse.

What follows is intense and frenzied. The inconsistency of Liam's story gathers momentum and revelations about the siblings' lives as wards of the state add to the sense of sadness.

Cracks emerge in the volatile relationship between Danny (Gavin Williams) and Helen (Shian Denovan) as she slowly comes to realise her loyalty to Liam (Pat Moonie) is misguided (or comes at a price).

Set in a struggling lower middle-class Britain, this serious, dark play about family, trust and fear is a beautifully crafted piece of theatre.

Although elements are predictable, as the calamity of circumstances intensifies, Liam's reluctant but heartfelt and desperate disclosures seem totally believable.

Plays with dark and intense themes can only work with a strong cast and great direction.

Orphans has both. I couldn't possibly say enough about British-born actor Denovan, who recently arrived on our shores. Her performance was spectacular.

She played the volatile, controlling and capricious Helen with amazing skill, displaying a remarkable ability to change emotions in a moment. Turn To Page 6



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● Kristin Lemura

■ Collingwood restaurant owner **Kristin Lemura** has won the **Miss Pinup Australia** competition. She uses the stage name **Cherry Fizz**. She and husband **Daniel** run the **Noble Experiment**.

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■ She also shows a tone or quality of voice that was beautiful, even when she was screaming.

Pat Moonie as **Liam** portrayed his character with the unhinged, border-line manic intensity of a great artist.

It is hard to like **Danny** despite his (wimpy) attempt to follow the moral path and **Williams**, in the most part did a convincing job.

The set was basic but left me wondering just how lower middle class they were.

Douglas Montgomery has directed a thoughtful and exceptionally well-performed drama.

The dramatic black outs and scene grabs were funky, and artistically added depth to the story.

Performance season:
Hurry only a few shows left
—until August 23

Venue: Brunswick Mechanics Institute, 270 Sydney Rd, Brunswick

Tickets: \$28 concession
\$24

Bookings: www.steamproductions.com.au or at the door.

- Review by Beth Klein