



Live Theatre Section 'Small Island'



What? Small Island, a production by the National Theatre

Where? Streamed digitally by the National Theatre

Who? Written by Helen Edmundson, adapted from Andrea Levy's novel of the same name. Directed by Rufus Norris.

When? 2019 at the NT/ watched by ourselves in October 23.

About? Jamaican immigrants arriving on the HMS Windrush in 1948, following WW2. The action is pre-war, post-war and some of it during the war.

Act Two begins in London, 1948, in a flat rented from Queenie by Gilbert, for himself and Hortense. The action follows the lives of Gilbert, Hortense and Queenie, which intertwine in unexpected ways.

Style:

The production is a blend of naturalism and non-naturalism. Most scenes are naturalistic in the main but there are frequent fourth wall breaks for narration in direct address to the audience from the main characters. These break up the naturalism. Hortense sees flashbacks of her grandmother from childhood and Gilbert of his cousin Elwood. We see characters in split stage who are in different places (end of Act One- Queenie, Michael, Gilbert, Hortense). The set often incorporates projection that expresses ideas such as the mould in the flat in Queenie's house which seems to spread the cyclorama like ominous storm clouds, creating a sense of foreshadowing. The ensemble also sail chairs physical theatre style in the hurricane at the start of the play.

'Big picture' themes:

- Racism in England in 1948
- Poverty for immigrant families
- The treatment of the Windrush generation (then and now)
- Effect of war time on society
- Interracial marriage and social prejudice

PVE:

Physical skills

(detailed description)

Vocal skills (detailed description)

Effect?- link it back to the question focus!
How did it contribute to the nominated effect or contribute to the total dramatic effectiveness? How did you respond?

SKILLS: 'LAYER UP'



Personal response:

It made me/ the audience feel that.../

The audience were surprised/shocked/amused/engaged when.../ It made me think about.../I made a connection with.../I enjoyed...