

## LANCASTER

# When I Was a Girl I Used To Scream And Shout

BOYS HAVE traditionally gone behind the cycle sheds to discuss and discover the facts and fictions of life and love. Girls, it seems from Sharman MacDonal's award winning play, have rock pools at a Scottish seaside town to explicitly explore their terribly taboo transitions from pests to puberty their doubts, fears and menstrual cycles. Not necessarily the stuff that accepted belly laughs are made of but tell that to the predominantly female audiences at Lancaster's Dukes Theatre revival of this four hander.

A mother and daughter revisit the resort they lived in 17 years ago, meet up with the daughter's childhood friend and whilst recalling the past take a long hard look at where they are now. A fairly universal theme but despite generation gaps, social differences, an unwanted pregnancy, a thwarted love

affair and more, the three women are not losers – it's not by chance the only male in the play, Ewan, is used and thrown away like the litter on the shoreline.

As Vari, the earth mother of three children and doctor's wife, Barbara Watt is excellent – body and brain exhausted but a winner in her way. Fay Blockey is equally well fitted as the trimmer, perfectly preserved but essentially unhappy Fiona. Mum Morag is played by Pam Buckle, ably capturing both the flighty 40s divorcee and annoyingly energetic potential grandmum.

In his professional rep debut Gary McLeod makes what he can of Ewan but it isn't the author's nor guest director Simone Vause's intention to let acting triumph over acne in the token male. The all Scottish cast provide refreshingly authentic accents to Vause's crisp paced action. Design is by Ashley Shairp, lighting by Mark Frisby, sound by Sue Yeo.

**Robin Duke**