

AM I TOO OLD FOR NSDF?

I think I might be getting too old for this? I first came here when I was 19 and this festival set my brain ON FIRE. People would say stuff like 'let's burn down the National Theatre'. And I would be like !!! woah !!!!! omg!!! 🤔🤔🐱

I feel tired

But now I hear people saying 'let's burn down the National Theatre' and 'fuck the boards' and I just - sigh- and feel very tired.

Have I come to this festival too many times, and seen the same discourse over a couple of generations of participants and got bored of it?

I turn 25 next month

Or - dare I say it - am I becoming a bit Tory? (god I hope I'm not)

This is my sixth NSDF (including two pandemic years). The truth is that I'm scared I'm already turning into one of those old people who remembers how the festival used to be when they first came and wants it to stay like that - forever. I've had people come up to me in the festival and be like 'wasn't Noff great when it was this [insert super problematic thing] in the past?'

I'm not so galvanised

Maybe I feel tired because I have spent a lot of time advocating for things to change? And have seen very little change as a result of conversations at NSDF.

Noises Off was a very different place and a very different kind of magazine/newspaper when I joined (in 2017!). Maybe I am spent and need to pass the mantle onto someone else. I have had a lot of conversations (and arguments) about this and I have been worn down. I work at a theatre where my access requirements have meant that I haven't been able to see shows I've worked on.

Maybe I'm not too old I'm just over it.

I still love NSDF

I think

I came as a writer in my first year of uni and then was invited back as paid staff for the next few years. Maybe as soon as something becomes a job it becomes less fun, less of a novelty, more of a responsibility, less of an area to experiment, and more of a - burden. I think that NSDF has a massive problem with paid/unpaid labour, but maybe I would feel less old if I had come less - or I had kept theatre as a hobby instead of a job.

FB.

QUEER THEATRE

5

I'm never sure I can define queer theatre because it's hard to understand what exactly makes it queer. Is it the subject matter or is it me?

I live my life through a queer lense and therefore I believe everything I create is queer in essence. It is unavoidable within my art.

Yet - if someone who is not queer creates a show centred around a queer storyline, does it count as queer theatre?

My answer and question, I ~~guess~~ guess, is does your art serve the community you are depicting in a POSITIVE manner? And do you have queer people in the room making it, breathing life into it with you.

If the answer is no to either of these things perhaps it doesn't fall under the 'queer theatre' bracket or perhaps I just don't want it to.

What does QUEER even mean?

6

QUEER: (google says)

1. Strange; odd Adjective

- feeling slightly ill: he was feeling rather queer.

2. informal, often offensive ... Homosexual.

NOUN

a homosexual man.

verb

Spoil or ruin.

I AM...

Eleanor Jenkins
an actor, writer,
theatre maker in the
east of England.

I AM...

pansexual, queer,
anxious yet outrageous,
and I believe I can
make a difference.

I AM...

5, 4", white, non-binary, 24,
(AFAB) with brown hair,
brown eyes and
FUNKY clothing.

QUEER (what I say)

7

Adjective

1. vibrant, beautiful, alive.

- feeling like she sparkled: she was feeling very queer.

2. informal, yet my label, offensive but reclaimed.

NOUN.

A member of the LGBTQIA+ community who CHOOSES this word to self describe.

verb.

to belong.

to have found a home.

I AM...

naive, hopeful, idealistic,
loud, petty, happy, sad,
emotional. I am everything
everyone tells me not to be
and proud.