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#fringenyc - Two Girls

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Thursday evening, Two Girls by Gabrielle Maisels replaced Richard 3 as my favorite FringeNYC production. Richard 3 was a wonderful post-apocalyptic production that closed Friday night at La MaMa. Two Girls opened on Thursday to a full house at the Connelly Theater and has a few performances remaining.

The Connelly Theater is the eastern most venue in the festival between Avenue A and Avenue B. It is well worth the trip.

The play starts off with Gabrielle Maisels playing Corinne, a privileged young white South African girl as well as Lindiwe, the daughter the family's housekeeper. Between the accents and the frequent changes of character, I found the beginning of the play disorienting. However, once my ear acclimated to the dialect and my mind to the shifts of character and settings, I was mesmerized.

The play moved past the beating of Lindiwe's friend by the police through the release of Nelson Mandela and to the United States during the campaign and election of Barack Obama.

Maisels masterfully illustrates the parallels between South Africa and the United States with both a wonderful script and amazing acting.

Adding to all of this is a fascinating back story. Gabrielle Maisels is the granddaughter of Israel Aaron Maisels who led the defense team that secured the acquittal of Nelson Mandela and nineteen others accused of treason by the apartheid government in the "Treason Trial" of 1956-61.

Ms. Maisels studied political theory at Harvard and Columbia as well acting and playwriting. She combines all of this into the must see production of FringeNYC 2010.