

The Guardian

22.8.00

Theatre

Cabin Pressure ★

Royal Lyceum Theatre

Cabin Pressure, from the New York company Siti, will feel radical only to those who have missed the last 20 years of theatre. Its central premise only feels edgy in the cosy, sleepy vale that is the international festival. It is a play about seeing a play, an audience-themed show in front of – you might have guessed it – an audience. Wow. The cast play scenes from various dramas. We see backstage, offstage, and the backs of props. Too much in love with the cleverness of its lame, tame idea, the play bends the notion of audience this way and that (there is even a kind of post-production group therapy in which the characters grapple with the indescribability of



Play within a play... Cabin Pressure

great theatre). But it never breaks down the barriers between the company on stage and the punters in seats. They tell us how weird and sometimes beautiful it is to sit and watch, but also describe the ennui that mediocre work can produce: "I was very embarrassed most of the time." I couldn't have put it better.

Elisabeth Mahoney

Ends tonight. Box office: 0131-473 2000.