

## THEATRE REVIEW

Geneva

★★★★☆



Jane Arnfield is a rare performer who can portray such subtle, emotional integrity that it becomes difficult for audience members to blink when she's on stage. For *Geneva*, she has teamed up with director Richard Gregory and film-makers John Alder and Alex Elliot to create a piece of conceptual theatre that eloquently uses script, lighting, film and live action to disorientate its audience into a state of quiet delirium. This one-woman piece progresses rapidly from a formal lecture into something surreal, with the opening deftly robbing the viewer of their ability to distinguish between what is real and what is imagined. The idea of hallucination is central to the way in which *Geneva* disentangles ideas of risk, love, death and desire, through recollections, informative monologues and the interaction between Arnfield (pictured) and the set. Throughout, the stage changes radically, raising all kinds of stakes in the process. Meanwhile, Arnfield's emotional ascent and plummet is, in turns, mesmerising and distressing, asking some bold questions about life via the notion that thousands of people feel the need to climb mountains. Rather than providing any clear answers, however, *Geneva* leaves you strangely yet pleasantly uncomfortable – presumably much like climbing Everest itself.

*Sam Summers*

Until Sat, Newcastle Playhouse, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, 7.30pm, £10, £8 conc. Tel: 0191 230 5151.

Metro: Central Station.

[www.northernstage.com](http://www.northernstage.com)