Blood & Polka Dots: 50 HEARTBREAKS Combines Kitsch, Sadness, and Ukrainian History

Heartbreak happens to everyone. Sometimes it happens to just one person, and sometimes it happens to an entire nation.

50 HEARTBREAKS (AND I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOUkraine) is a new dance-theater show about heartbreak and Ukrainian history. Created and performed by Jenna Bean Veatch and Nadia Tarnawsky, it will premier at Annex Theatre (1100 E. Pike St., Seattle) October 1-4 before touring to the New Orleans Fringe Festival in November.

The show weaves together a collage of kitschy dances set to 1960s breakup songs, mournful Ukrainian ballads sung live, delightful stop-action animation, old family photographs, gorgeous cardboard paintings by Susannah Anderson, and gruesome history lessons to tell Tarnawsky's family story, the dark tale of a family split apart in WWII Ukraine. It gives voice to a history that most Americans know little about – as many as 6 million Ukrainians died in WWII – and explores the heartbreak of all types of loss, from the loss of a loved one to loss of romantic love to loss of a people.

Choreographer Jenna Bean Veatch has been accused of creating “pure, unadulterated, heart-stopping whimsy.” She was the mastermind behind Annex's highly successful 2012 production, “Sideshow,” about an earnest young hunchback who dreamed of being beautiful. Called “a tender and modest piece of work” by The Stranger's Brendan Kiley, the show was supported by a grant from 4Culture and played to packed houses. Nadia Tarnawsky is a Ukrainian-American singer who received a 2011 Artist Trust Traditional Arts Fellowship for her work collecting and preserving Ukrainian folk ballads. 50 HEARTBREAKS combines Veatch's whimsy with Tarnawsky's depth. The result is a show that spans the range of possibilities held within the heartbreak theme, from fun and tongue-in-cheek to utterly devastating.

This show is supported by grants from Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs and the Bossak/Heilbron Charitable Foundation.

50 HEARTBREAKS (AND I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOUkraine)

October 1-4 at 8 pm
Annex Theatre
Tickets $5-$20
Performances
Event Type:
- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Ukrainian

Related Fields:
- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Ukrainian


Slavic Languages & Literatures
University of Washington
Padelford A210
Box 354335
Seattle, WA 98195

Phone: (206) 543-6848
slavadm@uw.edu