

Theatre Diaries Adelaide



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The Pink List truly is a show for us all to see right now...!

Reviewed by: Theatre Diaries Adelaide

Review by Sophie Tsoulos | 01 March 2026

Taking its name from the lists created by the Nazis to target gay men during the Holocaust and long after, is Michael Trauffer's *The Pink List*. The show sheds light on an unspoken part of history- you may know that LGBTQ+ people were identified with pink triangles in the Concentration Camps during WWII, however the imprisonment and prosecution of those on the lists continued well after 1945. Most shockingly, it was not until 2002 that the German parliament apologised, and only in 2017, was compensation given to survivors. *The Pink List* is a story that is hard to hear. It's a poignant reminder about the cyclical nature of history... Yet through the transformative power of sharing stories from repressed voices, Michael leaves you with a deeper sense of empathy and faith.

Michael has used real stories and experiences of those impacted by the Nazi regime to create a fictional character in which the show follows. Upon entering the intimate venue, Michael is already there, bundled in a corner, indicative of the somber journey we are about to embark on. Most notably about the show, is that it is actually a musical. Michael's songwriting is genius and true to the journey of the protagonist Karl Hellwig, further enhancing the narrative. His vocals truly soar, and are emotionally impactful for the audience. When Karl is released from the Concentration Camp, Michael sings 'Nothing's really over,' a heavy-hitting song that communicates the gut-rending reality of what "freedom" would have really meant for gay people at the time.

The plot line is clearly crafted for ultimate audience engagement. Scenes switch from Karl on trial to flashbacks of his past (pre + during WWII) and flashforwards (post war) that creates a dynamic rollercoaster of a piece. Michael's performance has the audience form an invested attachment to Karl and his life.

Michael has a way of gently taking the audience through the story that leaves you with a sense of hope at its conclusion. Whilst it may not have ended the way we'd hoped for Karl, the message for the audience is for us to be advocates, to ensure that no others meet his same fate. *The Pink List* truly is a show for us all to see right now.