

"in the absence of sunlight"
A is for Atlas
North Melbourne
Friday 2nd October '09

Peter Green
3MBS 103.5FM

"Hi Peter. I've seen you on the street holding your groceries and talking on your mobile phone. I've seen you late in the day picking up a leaf and feeling its texture. I need to ask you something."

This intriguing email from Tamara took me to my second fringe offering on Friday night – from Port Melbourne to the bar of a small old fashioned pub in North Melbourne for performance of **"in the absence of sunlight"** – solo performer and solo spectator in a radical pursuit of intimacy in the absence of sunlight.

I obeyed. I met Tamara in a crowded but very welcoming hotel bar – left in its original non-trendy décor.

I must be careful how I word this review because from the outset I had the feeling that I and Tamara were meeting secretly; a stranger seen from a distance in the street and brought up close. I don't want to suggest for a moment impropriety between performer and spectator; but I felt an immediate sense of intimacy as promised in the email.

This sense was given an immediate deepening when Tamara asked; "Would you like to see my room?" Here the performance continued including the view from the balcony to a busy Friday night Errol Street, and more intimate conversation.

As a performance it is even more confronting than one delivered by Roberta Bosetti about ten years ago entitled "The Secret Room" where I was one of 7 spectators made complicit by her revelations of an intense and suspect childhood, in a private house in Rathdowne Street.

My reaction to last night's performance was one that left me with a glow as if I had been talking deeply with a sort of latter day Emily Dickinson.

If you're the sort who's happy to sit in the front row and risk being drawn into the performance even if only briefly, this theatrical experience is right for you. It's confronting; you're going to have to speak.

Tamara is very convincing.

For details and booking: melbournefringe.com.au – 9660 9666.