

## **Prophet and Loss – A Review**

Margaret and Charles Gibson

The lights dimmed. This was the moment we were waiting for. We did not know what was in store. On this wintry night, the Wyselaskie Hall transformed into a sacred place to express the intense grief, anger, sense of bewilderment and incredible resilience of those who have lost loved ones in workplace accidents.

We were drawn immediately into these stories through actors who became one with the story, who put on the mantle of grief and pain, who with great integrity and sensitivity wore the garments of mourning and lived out the experience before our eyes. We saw the mood changes of the bereaved, the unique way each person dealt with the experience, and the efforts of those reaching out to them. We experienced the impact of the inflexibility and coldness of systems and processes unable to respond with any compassion.

This is an amazing production which deserves a wider audience. As we sat caught up in the unfolding drama we at times could hear people quietly weeping around us. Their tears seemed the tears of those who had walked this painful path. There was something about the haunting, sombre music; about the presence of angels and prophets. A sense of being drawn into complex worlds of suffering, unbearable pathos and struggle. There was also laughter – moments of recognition of the absurd and the human.

This was intimate, mesmerising theatre. Platitudes were not allowed to diminish the raw pain. Platitudes were exposed for what they are. Yet there was a sense of hope. It was not a superficial hope – it was a strong hope emerging from fragility, loss and despair. The hope of one who has gone through the worst experience of their life and somehow emerged.

The production concluded. There was a long silence. The audience wanted to acknowledge the wonderful performance but we could not break the mood. After some time, as the actors and musicians stood quietly in the half light, the appreciative applause began, at first tentatively and then building to a crescendo. We left in silence, profoundly moved by what we had seen, what we had lived through. We wanted to hold on to this experience, not allow it to melt away in chatter.