



The cast and crew of Counting and Cracking: Monica Kumar, Jay Emmanuel, S. Shaktidharan (known as Shakthi), Eamon Flack and Nipuni Sharad. Picture: Hollie Adams/The Australian

FESTIVAL

Adelaide Festival 2019 review: Counting and Cracking

Adam Langenberg, The Advertiser
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Counting and Cracking

Theatre / Australia

Ridley Centre, Adelaide Showgrounds

Until March 9

Counting and Cracking is a diverse, multicultural delight, giving a platform to voices and languages we don't hear often enough.

Moving across decades and between Sydney and Sri Lanka, *Counting and Cracking* is much more than a story about Australian — born Sid (short for Siddhartha), learning about his ancestral roots and his father, presumed murdered.

Across three acts, and more than three hours, it poignantly tells of how Sri Lanka changed from a country of two clans with English as its official language, to a divided country where Sinhalese was the official language.

A dramatic final scene heart-rendingly depicts the end result of violence between the Sinhalese and the Tamils, leading to the disappearance of Sid's father.

Its emotion-charged moments grip you so tightly that you'll be anxiously biting your fingernails rather than glancing at your watch towards the end of the show.

Kalieaswari Srinivasan is fantastic as older Radha, Sid's sarcastic and quick-witted mother who is reticent to speak about her traumatic past.

Vaishnavi Suryaprakash, Shiv Palekar and Rarriwuy Hick all shine brightly in a deep and diverse cast.



Antonyhasan Jesuthasan and Sukania Venugopal in Counting and Cracking.

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Ringed seats provide a spectacular view of the action and the set and musical accompaniments mean the show seamlessly swings from Sydney to Colombo and back again.

- Adam Langenberg

