

# THEATRE

## Talk About The Passion, Arc Theatre, Stockton

**T**HIS isn't for everyone. Inside 20 minutes of a 70-minute play, the vengeful father of a murdered six-year-old has half-throttled the callous female publisher of a book glorifying the boy's death in the words of a serial child rapist and killer. But Yarm playwright Graham Farrow has taken the outrage of James Bulger's parents being more harshly judged than his killers and stitched it together with the TV/media trade in unpleasant crime and its perpetrators.

Daniel Ainsleigh as Jason Carroway and Phillipa Peak as Evelyn Ayles are the two representatives of this unsavoury conflict. The highly watchable two-hander set in a laptop luxury office is the kind of production which should be played before every budding author in the business.

Although Ainsleigh retains his North-East accent and macho attitude, you can see why this script has been adapted for use around the globe. Crime and punishment remain the dynamite in society's debate and Farrow holds the fuse. Peak initially glances at her watch to warn her visitor he's overstayed his welcome, but when things turn ugly she will say anything to escape responsibility. That includes helping her accuser to go after the man growing rich in a prison cell. The clever twists that follow are better than a series of Tales Of The Unexpected... and passion lasts until the final full-point.

**Viv Hardwick**

● **Runs until Saturday. Box Office: (01642) 525199**