

# Quicksand

at the Dukes: 2 February 2011

Over 30 members of the U3A were part of a full audience for an excellent performance of 'Quicksand' presented in 'The Round' by the Dukes and the Theatre by the Lake (Keswick). The play, by Cumbrian writer Zosia Ward, was "a story of forbidden love on Morecambe Bay." It was this, and much more. Although set in Ulverston, we were drawn from the Old Man of Coniston to Morecambe Bay where the sands, like the life of the characters, were found to be changing and unpredictable.

The story told us of Elke, who had come to Cumbria from Warsaw to find answers to questions from her past. There she met Leo, with whom friendship and love soon developed. Leo's mother, herself a Polish immigrant, had become a hard-hearted business woman and the owner of an overflowing boarding house for Polish people seeking a better life in England. She was appeased by Ula, her loyal Polish housekeeper, whose remedy for everything was a bowl of steaming soup. Food, and vodka, were ever present in this play! Elke awakened memories from the past and the closely guarded secrets that had to be shared led to relationships being changed for ever.

The play was both thought-provoking and moving for the audience, as we heard of the economic hardships and exploitation of the Polish immigrants and saw the breaking and re-building of family relationships. It was performed by an excellent cast who carried us with them on their emotional journey. We were delighted to meet several of them afterwards and to share their thoughts on the play – and some Polish food!

Thanks to Sandra and Gordon for arranging another successful evening at the theatre.

***Carole Harman***