



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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STUART BOWDEN: SHE WAS PROBABLY NOT A ROBOT

Stuart Bowden

Tuxedo Cat @ Raj House

Until 2 Mar 2014

Review by Paige Mulholland

"Stuart Bowden: She Was Probably Not a Robot" is anything but predictable – with its ridiculous humour, highly original plot and artfully-questionable use of props and blocking, this laugh-out-loud production is not one audiences are likely to forget.

After a last-minute, poorly-advertised venue change and a loud, chaotic herding into the performance space, the audience was visibly rattled at the start of the production on the 21st of February. However, once the show begins, it's impossible to be distracted, particularly once Bowden starts walking over (and sometimes on) the audience while strapped to a large air mattress. The 60-minute show follows the story of the last man on Earth – his accidental escape from the apocalypse, his return to the ruins of his city, and his discovery of a very unique solution to his loneliness.

Despite the heavy subject matter, the performance is light, delightfully funny and endlessly awkward. If anything, it's the serious components that seem out of place, but, due to the quirky nature of the production, the clunky shifts between poignant and light-hearted just add to the silliness of it all.

Bowden is an easy-going, likeable performer, portraying each of his three characters with confidence. He performs as the protagonist, who you're not sure if you want to befriend or institutionalise, the probably-not-a-robot alien Celeste, and the mysterious and strangely-girlish moon. While Celeste was a clear favourite with her old-lady manner and abruptly-loud exits, each character is uniquely enjoyable.

In terms of set, props, music and lighting, the show delivers on its promise of "lo-fi, DIY". The show is charmingly low-maintenance with al-foil helmets, handheld keyboards and strange unitards. There may have been a few technical difficulties, but the benefit of performing a show with so many choreographed awkward moments is that the audience has no idea what is and what isn't accidental.

"Stuart Bowden: She Was Probably not a Robot" is a guaranteed hour of laughs for all ages with a surprisingly thought-provoking aftertaste. Unless you're afraid of being stepped on or hit in the head with a wayward air mattress, this show is not to be missed.

Rating: 4.5 stars (out of 5)