



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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STEWART REEVE: CHAMELEON

Cabaret Fringe Festival

Gluttony (Masonic Lodge)

Until 8 June

Stewart Reeve has been performing for years, but only recently honed in on his "brand" – he's an excellent mimic. With impressions ranging from good to absolutely spot-on, Reeve's Cabaret Fringe Festival performance was interesting and enjoyable to watch, but what was even more fascinating was his audience, who were absolutely frothing at the mouth – jumping out of their seats, singing along, swaying hypnotically to Reeve's vocals. One thing you can definitely say about Reeve is that he knows his key demographic and speaks to them at a level that seemed almost religious.

"Stewart Reeve: Chameleon" follows a fairly standard cabaret format – stories of Reeve's life, from dressing up as Dr Frank'n'Furter as a child to working at Dracula's Cabaret in Melbourne and premiering his first solo cabaret show – a David Bowie tribute – in Adelaide at this year's Fringe. The show features an eclectic range of songs, from showtunes to turning his voice into a recorder to mimic a horrendous recorder cover of "My Heart Will Go On" that once went viral online. His versatility is one of the most impressive parts of the show – who would have thought that someone could cover both "Avenue Q" and Marilyn Manson?

He finishes up with a couple of Bowie hits that bring the audience to their feet. The audience were hungry for more songs, but seemed to fatigue by the end of some of Reeve's longer numbers – cutting some of the longer songs back (particularly the Marilyn Manson cover) would give the audience more variety for less repetition.

It's unfortunate that the sound quality on opening night left his voice sounding muffled – it meant that some of the faster lyrics were easy to miss and the subtleties of the mimic were often lost in translation. With clearer sound, his impressions would have been even more impressive.

Reeve is a very charismatic performer, pulling the audience in easily with a flamboyant and gregarious manner. Occasionally he repeated himself and his patter could use a little tightening up, but his charm and comfort on stage made this easy to forgive.

"Chameleon" is great fun, and has something in it for everyone – bring your heavy metal loving son, bring your 80's tragic friend, bring the musical theatre lover in your life, and definitely bring anyone you know who likes David Bowie.