

# Review – The Trials and Tribulations of Mr Pickwick

BY [VINCENT](#) · FEBRUARY 25, 2014 – ‘HECKLER’



The lights dim, the sound of horse hooves clapping on the hard ground slowly fills the air; a side door opens and in walks a confused looking elderly man, wearing a suit that places us in the midst of the 18th Century. The elderly sits down, facing the audience, and begins to relate how he, after a series of comical misadventures, has ended up in the bowels of a bleak debtor’s prison...

I have to admit, this play was a couple of firsts for me, if you will. While I have been to my fair share of plays and musicals in the past, I have never had the pleasure of witnessing a one-man show. All of that aside, I have always loved a good play and the despite my abrupt introduction to this solo act, I found the format to be just as enjoyable as its bigger sibling.

The Trials and Tribulations of Mr Pickwick is a one-man play based on the novel *The Pickwick Papers*, written by Charles Dickens, and adapted by the singular star of the show, [Nigel Nevinson](#).

Nigel takes the audience on a journey back in time to his encounter with Mrs Bordell, both his landlady and accuser. Along the way we are introduced to several characters, each with their own unique accents, mannerisms and distinctive

costumes. Elaborate conversations and passionate arguments are cleverly facilitated with the changing of a hat and the turning a wig, Nigel switching between characters within few seconds without any loss of continuity.

This is what theatre is all about: witnessing actors perform seemingly impossible portrayals of raw emotion, where a man or woman can speak, act and perform lightning-quick costume changes on the fly while making you laugh, cry, cringe and laugh all again in such a short space of time. And space, for that matter.

Being only one hour long, *The Trials and Tribulations of Mr Pickwick* may disappoint devout fans of *The Pickwick Papers*, what with not all of Dickens' characters from the novel surviving the adaptation process. From those that remain, however, the spirit of the original has been crafted into an entertaining and artistic homage – a simple story, a handful of loud characters, and an ending tied with a Dickensian bow.