



Presented by Dawson Nichols

Reviewed 3 March 2014

With the title **I Might Be Edgar Allen Poe** you don't quite know what to expect and that only becomes more apparent as Dawson Nichols' character Joseph shyly walks on stage with a lantern in hand amid the audience's chatter and merely above a whisper states: "...I think I might be Edgar Allen Poe" before swiftly exiting. This unexpected opening sets the tone for the show – a surprising work of art tackling the difficult and often ignored theme of mental illness with black humour, leaving some

audience members laughing and gasping for air, or on the verge of tears. It can be said, however that no matter how the audience comprehended the performance everyone in attendance was left on the edge of their seat.

I Might Be Edgar Allen Poe was written and first performed by the star more than 20 years ago. The play itself hasn't been performed by Nichols for more than a dozen years but many versions of the production have taken place. Now that he is, in his own words, "a responsible adult", he has returned, bringing a maturity that couldn't be matched by a younger performer.

Nichols questions society's views on normality while using Poe's works and life as a base. Directly asking the audience: "Can you understand something without knowing what it means?", Nichols introduces the central theme to the show: the injustice of a world where we cannot know one another directly.

Although the script was written in 1993, the themes and subjects are perhaps even more relatable today in a world where social media dominates our lives, leaving us to present a version of ourselves to the world that only we want them to see. It is now becoming even more difficult to truly know one another.

In **I Might Be Edgar Allen Poe**, Nichols transitions seamlessly between the range of characters and stories he is portraying with every subject returning to the main character's experience with death. Poe's famous quote reads, '*all that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream*' and that is exactly what Nichols presents to his audience.

Due to the depth that Nichols brings to each character, it's easy to forget at times that **I Might Be Edgar Allen Poe** is a one-man show and not performed by an ensemble. It could be an extremely morbid piece if placed in the wrong hands, however with Nichols' brilliant comedic timing mixed with raw and earnest emotion, the result is an entertaining, touching and thought provoking piece leaving you to ponder the nature of the world well into your drive home.

Reviewed by Alyna Malyniak – Glam Adelaide

Venue: Main Stage, Bakehouse Theatre, 255 Angas Street, Adelaide

Season: 3-15 March 2014 (except Sunday)

Duration: 110 minutes

Tickets: All Tix \$25.00

Bookings: Book through [FringeTix online](#) or phone 1300 621 255