

BWW Reviews: ADELAIDE FRINGE 2014: THE DARKER Displays the Inner Man

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Dave the Demonstrator arrives to begin his workshop, and starts to explore what it means to be a man. Written and directed by Martin Christmas, and performed by David Daradan, the layers of civilisation are gradually stripped away to reveal the various types of man within in, **The Darker**. The suggestion is that the veneer of the gentleman, or gentle man, cannot survive for long before the dark streak within everyman breaks out. Dave demonstrates this, his inner demon lurking just below the surface, ready to escape at any moment.

That dark side of Dave begins breaking out, and he tries to bring it back under control. Each breakout becomes progressively more powerful and violent, and reining it in, continually gets harder. It becomes a fight between the powers of good and evil, and it seems that *The Darker* cannot lose. There is black comedy galore, and many confronting outbursts of unrestrained rage, interspersed with moments of calm, when the spectacles go back on and Dave tries to return to his task.

As the evening progresses props are used, then discarded onto the floor, and Dave removes layers of clothing, reflecting the peeling of the veneer, and the return to man in more primitive times. Daradan handles all of the switching to and fro with lightning speed and enormous bursts of energy in a very physical performance that challenges and confronts the audience with his intensity.

This is the sort of thing that I expect of a Fringe performance, a work that makes an audience think and leaves them talking about it after. This is not for sensitive souls, but for serious theatregoers.