

Dirt and Candy Review – “Medicine”

In this insightful and deeply affecting monologue, TJ Dawe shares a very personal story about his experience with the psychedelic plant medicine, ayahuasca. But this story is much more than that – it’s about what our ego will do to keep us safe, while sabotaging our lives.

Four years ago, Dawe already had a successful decade-long career on the Fringe circuit presenting his autobiographical monologues. He invited one of his heroes, Dr Gabor Maté, to see his show. He liked it. Sensing that Dawe would benefit, Maté invited him to a retreat for people battling addictive behaviours. The retreat included two shamanic ayahuasca ceremonies. It changed Dawe’s life.

This is not your average piece of theatre. It is engaging and thoughtful, more like an extended TED talk than a traditional play. It’s perfectly Fringe-worthy, and Dawe is a masterful storyteller. He interweaves a detailed portrayal of the retreat with observations made from his very Catholic childhood, his education, career, and relationships. He considers it his job to make sense of his life. In doing so, he helps us make sense of ours.

There was a scant audience tonight, and this show deserves to be seen by so many more. Dawe performed with humility and vivid expression. Perform is almost the wrong word. Dawe connected with us – I’m still crying as I write this – to our secret fears, our inner children. It was like we were at that retreat with him, having those same revelations. His final message is a beautiful one: no matter how weird or messed up or different we think we are, at our core we are all the same. And it’s wonderful.

By Jen St Jack - <http://dirtandcandy.com/2015/02/review-medicine/>