

Medicine



Presented by TJ Dawe. Bakehouse Theatre - Main Stage. 14 Feb 2015

Did you ever notice how utterly impractical is the layout of the typewriter keyboard? It could be so much simpler. TJ Dawe has pondered this and why the keys fall beneath such inappropriate fingers. This is not what his monologue is about, but it is an interesting sidetrack. He comes back to it a few times before he really hits his straps with the story of *'Medicine'*.

TJ Dawe has made his living studying and performing his own life. He's a Canadian and he says his one-man show career happened because he was lousy at auditions. He's a bit of an oddball, anyway. His parents were very strict. They met at church. His father was the principal at the school he attended.

He says he's always been a bit of an outsider. He has been in therapy and he has read a lot about psychology and human behaviour. He met one of the authors he admires and had the opportunity of going along to a retreat, to sleep in a yurt and have ayahuasca psychedelic medicine treatment. Here, in group therapy, he found himself admitting to things he had never broached before. And then there was the drinking of the opaque brown liquid and what transpired as it took effect.

Dawe is a lean and gangly bloke. Bespectacled. He stands alone, dressed in black, on the black stage of The Bakehouse. There are just the lights, rising and dimming for mood and emphasis. There's a snatch of soundtrack to illustrate backgrounds of the ayahuasca ceremony. Mainly, it is just Dawe talking. He talks for 75 minutes. He talks fast. Audience members are glued to their seats. He tells us things so raw and personal, so very different, and so desperately revealing. His intensity becomes such that he seems to be reliving those experiences - and we are right there, living them with him.

Reality is that TJ Dawe has become extremely accomplished at what he does. Not only does he present with extraordinary observations and recollections but also he is highly informative. Perhaps a chip off the old headmaster block that he teaches his audiences so much. But we go away richer for the new knowledge and dashing off to Google to learn more.

Samela Harris

When: 14 to 21 Feb

Where: Bakehouse Theatre - Main Stage

Bookings: adelaidefringe.com.au