

FRINGE 2015: Medicine – Bakehouse Theatre: The Studio – 4.5K

Fringe 2015
by MiriamK

TJ Dawe has an unassuming presence as he takes to the stage, but once he starts to speak, this transforms into a quiet powerfulness that engages and holds your attention. He tells the story of his quest to understand his inner workings more intimately through consumption of ayahuasca, a psychotropic plant (the *Medicine* of the show's title), at a week-long retreat.

Dawe is highly skilled in the art of storytelling. This isn't a word perfect, finely polished, recitation. It is an elegantly natural account of Dawe's experiences, his thoughts, his feelings – all delivered with an honest vulnerability that is transfixing. For anyone interested in psychology, this is an engrossing show. The reasons behind our personalities, our behaviours and our life-view can be many and varied, and the ways events and experiences affect us can be unusual and unexpected. As evidenced in Dawe's intriguing story.

At times it can feel as though you've accidentally come to a self-help seminar, rather than a Fringe show, but Dawe manages to keep it just on the acceptable side of this line. This is managed primarily because it's all about him and his story; the only conversion witnessed is his and you can take or leave the philosophical concepts presented, as you choose. Following a surprising revelation early in the piece, Dawe keeps the pace just right to ensure that you are engrossed in the smaller details of the tale, while also working towards the denouement.

A simple, yet intricate, production, *Medicine* is fascinating and rewarding. Though, it may not be the show for you if you suffer from involuntary sympathetic vomiting.

Kryztoff rating: 4.5K