

Adelaide Fringe 2017 review: Never Seen

Stephen Whittington, The Advertiser
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Never Seen

Music — Contemporary

Until February 25

CONCEPTUALLY brilliant and superbly performed, *Never Seen* by Hong Kong group Trilateral Lab is experimental but not inaccessible.

Wittgenstein in Cantonese may seem likely an unlikely proposition, but as the founder of linguistic philosophy, Wittgenstein is the perfect choice for a work about the borderline between speech and music.

Composer Alain Chiu, on keyboard and laptop, and violinist Eric Chan play melodies that mimic the six tones of Cantonese, following the words uttered by actor and vocalist Chu Pak-hong.

This simple concept steadily evolves into something complex and mesmerising. It doesn't matter if you can't understand the words; repetition ultimately obliterates semantics and words dissolve into pure sound.

I won't spoil the conclusion — but it is stunning. You're given an English translation when you leave, and suddenly it all makes sense, or transcends sense.

For the musically adventurous this show is highly recommended.

Stephen Whittington