

SEPTEM



By Hazel Hayes & Sammy Paul. Adelaide Fringe. Eclipse Productions. Directed by Benjamin Johnson. Studio at Bakehouse Theatre. 11-16 March, 2019.

What lengths will people go to for the sake of money? Can the promise of television fame have a fatal influence on someone's behaviour? How does the world determine which human beings are worthy of survival over others...? These are just some of the provocative questions posed by this return season of an exciting, outstanding show.

In more ways than one, *SEPTEM* makes for an ideal piece of Fringe Festival theatre. It's short, suspenseful, and carries a sting in its tail to make the experience linger. It's built on a diabolically effective idea that is fundamentally engineered to produce urgency and to waste no time in reaching the finish line.

By the same token, the very qualities that make *SEPTEM* a memorable miniature experience in the theatre also keep it from achieving the level of thematic depth and character detail that one suspects it might have done with even twenty more minutes of stage time. This reviewer would be keen to see what resulted from an hour-long presentation of the same excellent premise.

SEPTEM's seven performers (hence the title?) function believably as a potpourri of personalities trying to make the most of their limited time together, while ultimately unable to keep from making things difficult for others as well as themselves.

The stage design utilises its limited elements using both resourcefulness and flair, while the tech crew coped calmly with opening night difficulties and delivered a successful show, one that deserves a successful season.

Anthony Vawser