

Adelaide Fringe 2020 review: Spitfire Solo

There are two great battles fought in this revealing drama about a Spitfire pilot. One was the Battle of Britain.



Rating: ****

It is fitting that this production is in the 2020 Fringe as the number of surviving Battle of Britain pilots rapidly shrinks to several centenarians.

The show does capture the time, with news reels, and the occasional remembrances of the main character, Peter Walker, written and performed by Nicholas Collett.

There are two great battles of his life.

One is illustrated by running nimbly around stage, arms spread out, making Spitfire machine gun sounds chasing and being chased by Messerschmitts.

The other is of the old man's regret for the aftermath, when his bad-temper kept his daughter from him.

Now it is the year 2000, and there is a chance for redemption.

Collett is able to create the many characters in many timelines that this requires with great aplomb and no hint of ambiguity, whether they be schoolchildren learning of the Battle decades later, the pugnacious Yorkshire lad in love with flying, or the aged veteran beset by anger and remorse.

It was his finest hour, 1940, but 60 years later, as he flies out to Adelaide in search of reconciliation, the challenge to shine is there again.

Tim Lloyd – The Advertiser