

Rating: 5 stars (out of 5)

THE BOOKBINDER

[Bakehouse Theatre](#)

Until 20 Feb 2016

Review by [Kylie Pedler](#)

The Bookbinder is an epic adventure in miniature.

A book is a beautiful thing. When you have a good book, life outside fades away, the paper turns to dust and you get lost with the monsters in the woods, the winter wind that blows through your bones and the world of fictional adventure.

Dramatic, mysterious, and witty, Ralph McCubbin Howell's story is a wave of carefully crafted phrases; of descriptive words, rhyme and wonder that are thought-provoking and reflect the stories complexity. And like any good fable there is a lesson to be taught.

Once upon a time, there was an apprentice bookbinder who made rash decisions, and got a little too involved in his work. "For a bookbinder should fix a book but never read the pages within." Unfortunately he falls asleep and cuts corners to complete the task. That is when he becomes trapped inside the pages of the book and the journey begins.

As the Narrator, Ralph McCubbin Howell, is captivating and engaging: an absolute storyteller. He becomes the stories that unravel and is convincing throughout, whether as an old bookbinder, a young pretentious boy, or a dark eerie woman with a headscarf wrapped under her chin.

From an ingenious desk lamp that creates and changes the mood with its varying sweep, to shadow play, paper craft, water play, movement and puppetry all are beautifully interwoven. And then there is the intricate artistic work of Hannah Smiths' pop-up book. It's visually stunning and breathtakingly sophisticated in detail.

While "bookbinding is not a vocation that's compatible with many", this production has something to offer everyone.

"You can get lost in a good book ..." but this fringe season it's time to get lost with Trick of the Light Theatre's Bookbinder adventure.

Not to be missed!

Adelaide Theatre Guide