

JAMES MCLEAN: BIG ENOUGH AND UGLY ENOUGH



"THE PERFORMANCE IS AN ENDEARING BLEND OF ONE-MAN-SHOW THEATRICALS AND SELF-DEPRECATING STAND-UP"

Words: Tilde Wiese

We're members of a generation in which coming of age in no way prevents us from continuing to graze in our parents' pantry, live rent-free in their home, and have our dental expenses covered by top-level private family health insurance. For too many of us, it's an all-too-familiar lifestyle, and one we're not keen to abandon. Ever wondered what it would be like to do so? Look no further than the comically unfortunate tales of the lovably awkward James McLean.

Big Enough and Ugly Enough tells the story of being cruelly ripped from the comfortable cradle of post-adolescence and thrust out into the adult world, alone and unprepared, at the tender young age of 24. Neither big nor ugly, McLean is forced to face a world that is both of those things as he makes the journey into the realms of soul-destroying hospitality jobs and exclusively feline companionship.

Guided by a letter of advice bequeathed to him by his late grandmother, McLean navigates his way through a series of theatrical episodes that see him in an unfortunate confusion over the true activities of a "swinging social club" for the over-fifties, escaping mortal danger during an ill-advised foray into the wild, and, ill-equipped and under-cutleried, forced to consume an entire bucket of ice-cream armed with only a fork.

The performance is an endearing blend of one-man-show theatricals and self-deprecating stand-up, with just a smattering of show tunes on the side. While you can count on getting your fair share of chuckles out of this show, it is McLean's dramatic training that truly shines through. His conversational manner, coupled with the intimate venue, conjures an instant rapport with the audience that makes *Big Enough and Ugly Enough* feel more like a night in with a theatrically talented friend than a night out with a socially awkward, Converse-wearing young comedian. Contemplating taking the plunge into the real world of self-sufficiency? Just want some company other than your cat? James McLean will be both guru and confidante on this occasionally dangerous yet endlessly entertaining journey to independence.